CHARIOTS of LADIES

Francesc Eximenis and the Court Culture of Medieval and Early Modern Iberia

NURIA SILLERAS-FERNANDEZ

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NURIA SILLERAS-FERNANDEZ

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To the loving memory of my grandmother,
Hermenegilda Alcoceba Lallana, ejemplo e inspiración

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Acknowledgments

I have a very clear recollection of being fifteen years old and reading Francesc Eiximenis's *Exemples e faules* in my Catalan literature class while growing up in Barcelona. I did not like the book, but I did not forget it either. Back then I would never have imagined that many years later I would become a medievalist and write a book, in English, dealing with that same author. Later on, while working on my PhD in medieval history at the Universitat Autònoma de Barcelona, focusing on the Crown of Aragon, and carrying out research on Queen Maria de Luna, it was impossible to escape the shadow of her counselor, Francesc Eiximenis, and his texts. Nevertheless, I did not conceive of this project until years later, and a continent away, when I was teaching in the history and literature departments of the University of California, Santa Cruz, and it was not until I took up my present position, as assistant professor in the Department of Spanish and Portuguese at the University of Colorado at Boulder, that I began to focus on it in earnest.

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Abbreviations

ACA	Arxiu de la Corona d'Aragó
AEM	*Anuario de Estudios Medievales*
AGS	Archivo General de Simancas
AMV	Arxiu Municipal de València
ARP	Arxiu del Reial Patrimoni
ARV	Arxiu del Regne de València
BA	Biblioteca da Ajuda
BAM	Biblioteca de l'Abadia de Montserrat
BC	Biblioteca de Catalunya
BCompl	Biblioteca Complutense
BHUB	Biblioteca Històrica de la Universitat de Barcelona
BNE	Biblioteca Nacional de España
BNP	Biblioteca Nacional de Portugal
BRABLB	*Boletín de la Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*
BRME	Biblioteca del Real Monasterio de El Escorial
CD	*Carro de las donas*
CHCA	Congreso de Historia de la Corona de Aragón
CODOIN	Colección de documentos inéditos de la Corona de Aragón
CR	cancillería real
CSIC	Consejo Superior de Investigaciones Científicas
LD	*Llibre de les dones*
MR	mestre racional
RABLB	*Real Academia de Buenas Letras de Barcelona*
RAH	Real Academia de la Historia

Note on Style, Usage, and Translations

This book discusses individuals from a range of cultures within the Iberian Peninsula and beyond, many of whom moved between cultures or were active in two or more linguistic traditions simultaneously. In order to refer to these individuals in a way that reflects both these cultural differences and the particular historical identities of the individuals themselves, I have chosen as a general rule to use the forms of their names that are consistent with the cultural/linguistic tradition or polity with which they or their contemporaries most often identified them or with which we most often identify them. Hence, the many "Marias" who are Castilian are referred to as "María," and those who are Catalan or Portuguese as "Maria." "Johns" appear variously as João (Portugal), Juan (Castile), or Joan (Crown of Aragon). Fernando de Antequera, who appears here as a ruler of the Crown of Aragon is referred to as "Ferran," while his descendant, the husband of Isabel the Catholic, is referred to as "Fernando"—the name by which almost all readers will know him. Likewise, Isabel and Fernando the Catholic's daughter, Catalina, is referred to here as "Catherine" for the period after her marriage, because in the English tradition she is famous as Henry VIII's spurned wife, Catherine of Aragon. The names of popes, by contrast, are given in English. In some instances, it may appear that the choices I have made are arbitrary, and it is often difficult to pin these figures down to one linguistic identity, but I have been consistent in the case of each individual, which is the most important thing. Unless otherwise noted, all translations of Latin and peninsular languages in the text are my own; editorial exigencies have prevented the inclusion of the original language citations, but these can be easily found via the references. American spellings and usage have been preferred over British.

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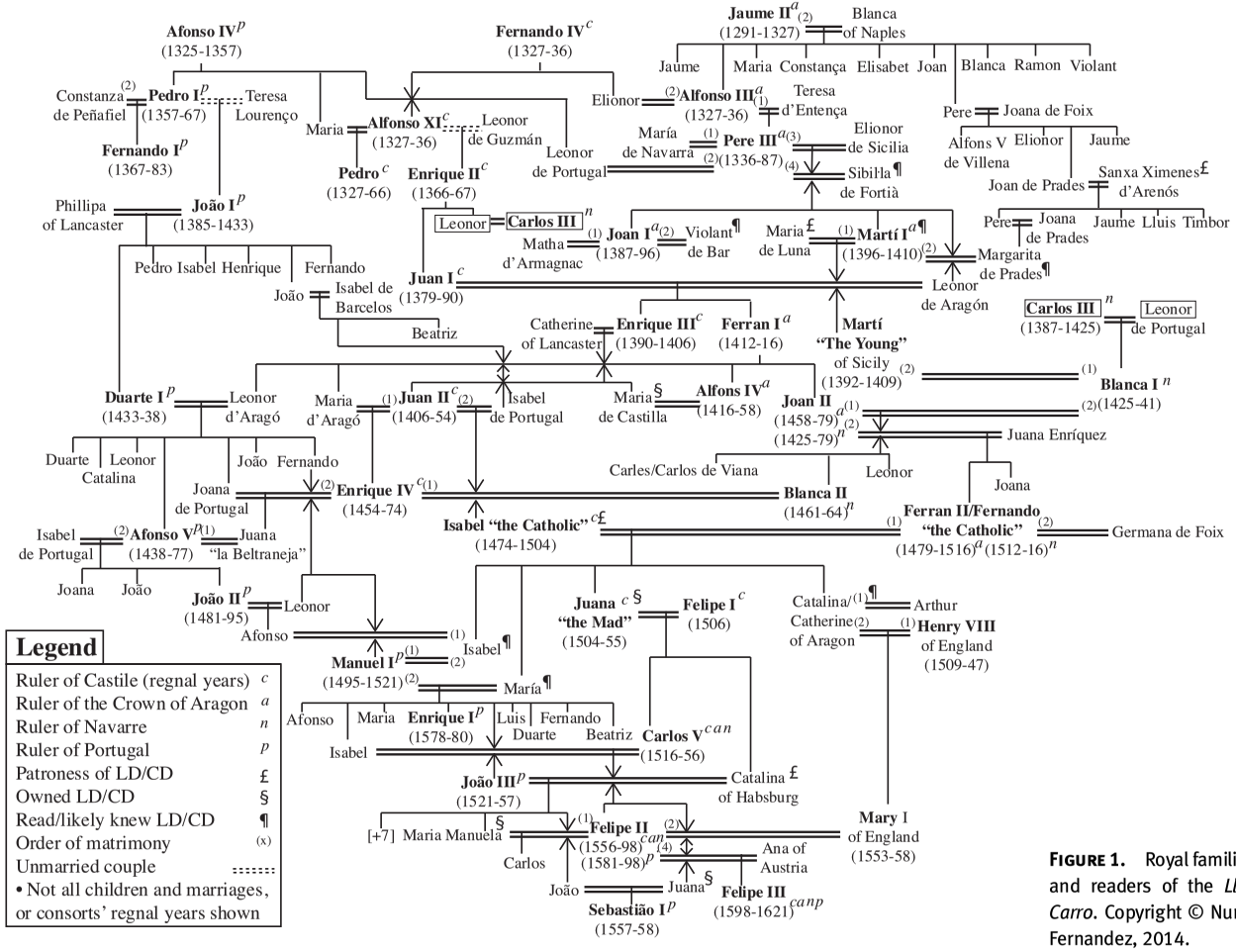

FIGURE 1. Royal families of Iberia and readers of the *Llibre/Libro/Carro*. Copyright © Nuria Silleras-Fernandez, 2014.

Introduction

Eiximenis, His Patronesses, and Female Virtue in Late Medieval and Early Modern Iberia

Between the end of the fourteenth century and the first half of the sixteenth century the works of the Franciscan friar, moralist, theologian, and political theorist Francesc Eiximenis (c. 1327–1409) were read, translated, copied, and printed all over Europe. His works were read during his lifetime in manuscript form, and later in printed editions, most of which were translations and adaptations of books that were originally written by him in Catalan and, less frequently, in Latin. One hundred and fifty-one manuscripts of his works are extant, thirty-three of which are translations to Castilian (Spanish), Aragonese, Flemish, French, and Latin.[1] With the dissemination of the printing press in the late fifteenth century Eiximenis's prestige only grew. Twenty printed editions of his books were produced between 1478 and 1542, including originals and translations.[2] Eiximenis's reputation was such that when the first printing press was established at Geneva in 1478, the first book produced on it was a French translation of his most popular work, the *Llibre dels àngels* (*Book of Angels*), while in Granada in 1496, only four years after the fall of the Muslim emirate to the "Catholic

1. See the inventory of his manuscripts and incunabula in Puig i Oliver et al., "Catàleg dels manuscrits"; Massó i Torrents, "Les obres"; and Viera, "Más sobre manuscritos."

2. Eiximenis, *Art de predicació,* xxv; Wittlin, introduction to Eiximenis, *De Sant Miquel Arcàngel,* 7.

Kings," a Spanish translation of his *Vida de Jesucrist* (*Life of Jesus Christ*) inaugurated the printing press there.[3] None other than Hernando de Talavera, the archbishop of Granada and Queen Isabel the Catholic's confessor, had promoted its publication.[4] Eiximenis's works were also in many private book collections. For instance, in Valencia—his home for most of his life—he was the most popular author in the fifteenth century; only the Bible appears more frequently than his works in library inventories.[5]

During his own lifetime Eiximenis was a very influential cleric, who had strong connections with the royal house of the Crown of Aragon—the patrimonial aggregate that, together with Castile, ruled over most of the Iberian Peninsula and much of the western Mediterranean. In his time the Crown of Aragon was a dynastic federation consisting of the Principality of Catalonia, the Kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia, as well as islands and territories scattered across the Mediterranean, including the Kingdoms of Mallorca, Sardinia, Corsica, and Sicily—the latter having been ruled through most of the previous century by a cadet branch of the same house.[6]

Eiximenis was no ordinary friar. He was a religious reformer, and an energetic proponent of the Observance, a reform movement that would transform the Franciscan order. He was also both a royal counselor and a political theorist—an individual who was very much interested both in the day-to-day running of government and in the theories and principles that underlay it. Finally, he was a prolific popular moralist, whose works included treatises on feminine piety and virtue that attracted an important following among aristocrats of both genders—a readership that he actively courted as patrons in order to better disseminate his edificatory agenda. During his lifetime his works were read for the most part in the Crown of Aragon, but soon after his death they became even more influential and esteemed in other royal and aristocratic courts in the peninsula: first in Castile, then Portugal, and finally, across western Europe. His most avid readers included queens and women of

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3. Fernández Martín, *La real imprenta;* and Martín Abad, "Apunte brevísimo."

4. The work was titled *Vita Christi,* and only the first of the two volumes planned was published. The final lines read: "This first volume of *The Life of Christ* of Brother Francisco Ximénez was finished and printed in the great and renowned city of Granada on the last day of the month of April 1496 by Meynardo Ungut and Johannes de Nuremberga, Germans, by the order of and at the expense of the most very reverent lord Don Hernando de Talavera, first Archbishop of the Holy Church in this, the said city of Granada." BNE: Inc. 1126, Eiximenis/Talavera, Vita Christi, f. 170v.

5. Eiximenis, *Regiment de la cosa pública,* 29; Berger, *Libro y lectura,* 380–81.

6. For historical context, see Bisson, *The Medieval Crown;* Hillgarth, *The Spanish Kingdoms;* and Menéndez Pidal ed., *Historia de España.* The Crown of Aragon's political structure reflects what Horden and Purcell have identified as Mediterranean characteristics: it was a fragmented aggregate of diverse, independent-yet-interrelated, political, economic, and cultural units, largely defined by their relationship to the sea. Horden and Purcell, *The Corrupting Sea,* 10–15.

the upper nobility, courtiers, Franciscans, nuns, religious reformers who were interested in spirituality, and also merchants and artisans. Given the number of editions that some of his works went through, it would be no exaggeration to say that they constituted late medieval "best sellers." The personal prestige he carried at the royal court, together with the success of the Observant movement, of which he was seen as a forerunner and spokesman, established Eiximenis's writings within a complex network of readers who owned, read, and recommended his manuscripts to be copied, and, in later centuries, to be printed.[7] The rulers that supported him during his lifetime—Pere the Ceremonious, Elionor of Sicily, and their two sons, Joan I and Martí I, together with the latters' wives, Matha d'Armagnac, Violant de Bar, and Maria de Luna—both read his works avidly and promoted them among the noblemen and ladies-in-waiting of the court, as well as among their peers, relations, friends, and functionaries. Eiximenis's greatest preoccupation was with the practice of Christian virtue, and most of his books are essentially guides to proper behavior; but out of this concern emerges also a strong focus on politics and on spirituality. Thus, he enjoined the kings and queens of this time to behave righteously, but not merely for virtue's own sake or for the good of their souls. He understood the connection between political rulership and moral performance, and so he not only strove to inculcate them with virtue, but also taught them how to conceal their own particular moral defects from their subjects, in order to mitigate popular anxieties that the gulf between monarchical ideal and human reality might provoke.

Nevertheless, few scholars today read Eiximenis's work, and those who do tend to be specialists in Catalan or Iberian literature and history. As a consequence, few of Eiximenis's texts are available in modern scholarly editions. Some exist only as incunabula, and have not been printed in full since the sixteenth century. Others are extant only in manuscript form, and others have been lost altogether.[8] Thus, despite his tremendous success in his own time and the century and a half that followed, he has become a rather obscure figure in the literary-historical landscape. Only now are Iberianists discovering Eiximenis and coming to realize that one must take into account his influence to fully understand the complex picture of late medieval and early modern Iberian literature and culture. Such are the paradoxes of our discipline, and the factors that contribute to scholars' elaboration of literary

7. The borrowing of books among the elite is documented in the case of the Crown of Aragon by many letters from the royal chancery of the Crown of Aragon; see Rubió i Lluch, *Documents.*

8. The Institut de Llengua i Cultura Catalana (Section Francesc Eiximenis) of the Universitat de Girona is undertaking the task of editing his works. There is also an English anthology of his texts: Renedo and Guixeras, *Francesc Eiximenis.*

canon.[9] That said, several scholars have devoted most or a significant part of their careers to the study of Eiximenis's works, including Andrés Ivars and Martí de Barcelona (both early twentieth-century Franciscans), and more recently, North American academics, including Curt Wittlin, David Viera, and Jill Webster, and Catalan and Valencian scholars, such as Martí de Riquer, Albert Hauf, Xavier Renedo, Lluís Brines, Sadurní Martí, and Carmen Clausell—just to cite a few of the most prominent.[10] The present book—made possible by the work of all of these scholars—represents a new turn in the study of Eiximenis and his oeuvre, placing it in a peninsular and continental context, and examining the vectors by which it was disseminated and the forces and factors that transformed it.

This book is not, however, an exercise in rehabilitating the reputation of a now-obscure writer—Eiximenis himself, whatever his merits or failings as a literary figure, is secondary to the project. *Chariots of Ladies: Francesc Eiximenis and the Court Culture of Medieval and Early Modern Iberia* analyzes models of virtue and female agency current among women, and, more specifically, queens and noblewomen, in the Iberian Peninsula from the fourteenth to the sixteenth century, as evidenced through the medium of particular works of Eiximenis that I would argue contributed to the creation of a discourse relating to the codification of what was seen by contemporaries as "proper" feminine behavior. His moral writings functioned as a counterpoint to the coquettish culture of late medieval French courtly literature that was established in the Crown of Aragon in the late fourteenth century by Joan I (r. 1387–96) and his queen, Violant de Bar, and to the skeptical and classically inspired works of contemporaries, like Joan I's secretary, Bernat Metge, whose *Lo somni* (*The Dream*) marked a move toward humanism.[11]

This book also looks at how and why certain texts on practical morality and gender became accepted among the noble elite. Several of Eiximenis's works were popular in many or all of the medieval Iberian kingdoms—in particular, the Crowns of Aragon, Castile, and Portugal—and these works were typically translated from Catalan into Castilian. Much as Peter Burke proposed that a work like Castiglione's *Il cortegiano* (*The Book of the Courtier*) was a factor in the "Europeanization of Europe," I would contend that the dissemination of Eiximenis's writings was a factor in the "Iberianization of Iberia" and, concretely, in a common conceptualization of gender and

9. See Whinnom, "Spanish Literary Historiography"; Silleras-Fernandez, "Paradoxes humanistes."

10. See "Works Cited" at the end of this book.

11. See Cortijo Ocaña, "Women's Role"; Cortijo Ocaña, *La evolución genérica,* 20–27; and Silleras-Fernandez, "Paradoxes humanistes."

the place of women in government.[12] The *Llibre de les dones,* published in Castilian in print in 1542, was widely read and available in several languages through the sixteenth century; its ideas reflected fundamental concerns of early modern court life in the peninsula.

As Edward Said put it, "The history of all cultures is the history of cultural borrowing," and this borrowing shaped the polysystemic and polyglossic literary culture of medieval Iberia—one in which several languages and traditions were in continual contact and exercised a profound influence over each other. "Medieval Iberian literature" is nothing less than an amalgamation of the various Romance literary and cultural traditions (Castilian/Spanish, Catalan/Valencian/Mallorcan, Occitan, Aragonese, and Galician/Portuguese), together with those of Latin, Hebrew, and Arabic.[13] Moreover, in addition to these indigenous currents, one must also consider the extrapeninsular traditions originating in continental Europe and across the Mediterranean that also influenced the conceptualization and production of literature in this era.[14] Without denying the particularities of each of the native traditions, one might conceive of this borrowing as a symptom of the hybrid nature of culture.[15] Looking at some of Eiximenis's texts, and at how they traveled, and were translated, transformed, and received, may help us understand the discursive strategies that developed in this period regarding gender roles and the place of women in society and politics, and how these evolved within a brief two centuries. Eiximenis's works function in a Kristevian fashion, as intertexts in a much larger grid of cultural practices; they can be understood as focalizing outlets in a network of texts discussing spirituality and women and their role in society, while simultaneously they have an intertextual value rooted in their relationships with other texts from the past, Eiximenis's present, and the future.[16]

This work concentrates primarily on two of Eiximenis's treatises: the *Llibre de les dones* (*Book of Women*) and the *Scala Dei*, or *Tractat de la contemplació* (*Ladder to God*, or *Treatise on Contemplation*), and the individual women to whom these were dedicated, and for whom they were written or translated. Three iterations of the *Llibre de les dones* are examined, both in terms of their content and in relation to other works of the same genre produced during the same period. It appears clear to me that this book, together with Eiximenis's *Scala Dei*, became a blueprint for female virtue in the royal court of

12. See Burke, *The Fortunes of the Courtier,* 2.
13. Said, *Culture and Imperialism;* Dagenais, "Medieval Spanish Literature," 42.
14. Kinoshita, "Medieval Mediterranean Literature."
15. Bhabha, "Cultural Diversity," 155–57.
16. Kristeva, *Sémieiotikee,* 164.

the Crown of Aragon under Maria de Luna, and her fifteenth-century successors. In 1469, thanks to the marriage of Fernando II of Aragon and Isabel I of Castile, who together ascended the throne of Castile in 1474 and that of Aragon in 1479 (and were known from 1496 as the "Catholic Kings"), this book entered the literary milieu of the Castilian court, where it most likely served as a model for the education of their four daughters. Isabel could not read the work in its original Catalan, so she commissioned a Spanish translation as *El libro de las donas* (*The Book of Women*). In this new textual incarnation, Eiximenis's work was recast for a new readership living within a distinct cultural-linguistic environment. Half a century later, Catalina of Habsburg, Isabel the Catholic's granddaughter and the sister of Emperor Carlos V (ruler of Spain, 1516–56), was offered a new translation. She had become queen of Portugal, and one of her chaplains offered her the book so that she could adopt the same model of female virtue that had inspired her illustrious grandmother and had been used to educate her own mother, Queen Juana "the Mad" (r. 1504–55). However, by 1542 times had changed. A new "Kingdom of Spain" was emerging out of the multiplicity of medieval Iberian kingdoms, and had become the heart of a massive imperial power under Carlos V, king in Spain and Holy Roman Emperor (1519–56). Thus, the book was transformed again, as *Carro de las donas* (*The Chariot of Women*), adding Isabel the Catholic and other contemporary or near-contemporary nobles as exemplary characters, editing out the parts that were no longer considered relevant or appropriate for this new age, and including the ideas of another illustrious Valencian writer, Joan Lluís Vives.[17] Now set in type, it was able to reach a far wider audience than earlier manuscript editions had, and it soon circulated widely in Iberian courts and beyond.

Thus, the *Llibre de les dones,* in its three iterations (*Libre de les dones, Libro de las donas, Carro de las donas*), along with the *Scala Dei,* constitutes an excellent lens for observing and analyzing the evolution of gender discourse, female literary stereotypes, queenship, piety and devotion, and the role of translation in the Iberian Peninsula and beyond, from the fourteenth through the sixteenth century. Simultaneously, the study of these books provides a basis for exploring the relationships between text, theory, and practice, and the interaction between the discourses of monarchy, counsel, and gender. At bottom, the *Llibre de les dones* is a conduct book that explains the nature of women in order to help them overcome their limitations, but it is one that pushes women's involvement in piety, devotion, and oration a step beyond

17. *LD*, 1:21; hereafter *LD.* For an edition of the *Carro,* see Clausell Nácher, *Carro de las donas.*

most other didactic texts. In general, like other books dedicated to women, it had a practical function: that of preparing actual women, like the queens noted above, for the social, political, and moral challenges that they would face in real life.

In Eiximenis's own words, the *Llibre de les dones* is "all about women" (*tot de dones*), but is intended, nevertheless, to serve as a guide for Christians in general, both male and female.[18] In the Middle Ages, the patriarchal conception of power and privilege, anxieties regarding sexual control, and issues relating to the body and gender provoked varying degrees of angst in male writers, and particularly religious authors. Eiximenis was no exception.[19] His aim here was to present an exposition of the female virtues and vices, and how to mitigate the latter using the teachings of the Bible and the opinions of the fathers and doctors of the church. Eiximenis was driven by a paradox: if God had created women as fundamentally good beings, how could Eve have become Satan's agent?[20]

The Women behind the Book

On the other hand, Eiximenis composed the *Llibre de les dones* under particular circumstances and for a specific patroness, Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, Countess of Prades—a lady of the upper nobility who was having serious marital problems, and who in 1385 had effectively separated from her husband. Some years later, probably in 1397, Eiximenis combined parts of the book he had written for Sanxa with fresh material, in order to offer a small devotional book to Maria de Luna, the new queen of the Crown of Aragon. This work, known as the *Scala Dei,* or *Tractat de la contemplació,* provides fascinating insight into the model of queenship imagined by Eiximenis, and confirms him as a pioneering proponent of a new type of devotion, linked to the Franciscan Observance, as well as the *devotio moderna,* that had begun to gel precisely at this time.[21] This book, which has not yet been the subject of a critical edition, made its way from the Crown of Aragon to Castile, where

18. *LD,* 1:8.

19. Weissberger and Breitenberg each invoked Freud's definition of anxiety as a "particular state of expecting the danger or preparing for it, even though it may be an unknown one," as the basis for the proposition that the literature produced during the reigns of Isabel the Catholic and Elizabeth I served a therapeutic function to mitigate "the threat that queenship represents to the patriarchal status quo." Weissberger, *Isabel Rules,* xv.

20. Viera and Piqué, *La dona en Francesc Eiximenis,* 5; Viera and Piqué, "Women in the *Crestià,*" 96–97; Viera, "Francesc Eiximenis on Women."

21. There is a partial and modernized edition of the *Scala Dei:* Eiximenis, *Scala Dei: Devocionari de la reina Maria.* See also Baraut, "*L'Exercitatorio de la vida spiritual,*" 234–35. Unlike some other scholars,

it came to be avidly read and highly esteemed among the clerical entourage of Isabel the Catholic. Adapted, translated, or simply excerpted, it was in this way that Eiximenis's thought was quickly woven into Castilian literary culture. The profound interrelation of the Castilian and Lusitanian dynasties provided for the subsequent transmission of the friar's ideas to Portugal.

Both the *Scala Dei* and the *Llibre de les dones* provide a window into the process of cultural transmission and the roles of patronage and translation in late medieval and early modern European literature. Further, the literary longevity of the *Llibre de les dones* suggests that the models of womanhood it presents transcended temporal and cultural specificities. On the other hand, tracing the transformation of this work allows us to grasp the variations in the concept of womanhood that marked the transition from the Middle Ages to the Renaissance, both across time and cultures. The four women behind these books—one countess, Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, and three queens: Maria de Luna, Isabel the Catholic, and Catalina of Habsburg—were much more than "implied readers"; they deliberately used to their advantage the model proposed by Eiximenis and his early modern translators/adapters as they fashioned themselves as female rulers. This is a fact reflected in their correspondence and their public involvement in politics, the court, and government, in which their feminine epistolary voices reflect and surpass the models and modalities recommended by Eiximenis and his contemporaries. For these authors, proper female conduct was both an ideological and an aesthetic posture.[22] Moreover, these four women were all informed by and shared in similar models of virtue, proper female behavior, and rulership, which together contributed to their *virtus politica* (political virtue). In an age when women were discouraged from being active political agents and authorities, they managed successful political careers that were not challenged during their lifetimes, nor did their political careers taint their popular and historical reputations. This model of female comportment was represented in the sets of books that they owned, that were dedicated to them, and that they most likely read.

When a medieval author, like Eiximenis, dedicated a book to someone in particular—a common conceit in this era—there was always a reason behind it, and frequently it was a desire on the part of the writer to insinuate himself into the recipient's network of patronage and protection—hence, the importance of historicizing the relationship between the author (or translator/adapter, as

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I consider Francesc Eiximenis a precursor of the Observant Franciscans and a link to the *Devotio moderna* in the Crown of Aragon. See Hauf, *D'Eiximenis a Sor Isabel,* 46–47.

22. Goldsmith, *Writing the Female Voice,* vii; Cherewatuk and Wiethaus, *Dear Sister,* 4.

the case may be) and the women to whom each of these works was dedicated, as well as the audiences each book found. Beyond this, this study seeks to problematize the relationship between theory and practice in the didactic context by analyzing the identities of the readers of these books in terms of the cultural, social, and political environments in which they moved. A key factor in such relationships was largesse—munificence had been established by Aristotle as one of the features of the ideal man, and in the patronage-driven socioeconomic environment of the Middle Ages it had been cemented as a critical characteristic of the nobility.[23] Not only was largesse held up as an aristocratic quality in itself, but literary patronage functioned on a clear, if unmentioned, principle of quid pro quo. A writer whose work praised and enhanced the reputation of a powerful individual felt entitled to compensation and reward. Indeed, in his moralizing essays, Eiximenis himself frequently invokes the responsibility of the prince to exercise such openhandedness. In Eiximenis's world there were also women who controlled considerable wealth, or had influence over men who did, and these powerful women also wanted to exhibit the generosity that marked their class. Moreover, a book constituted a permanent memorial to the patron, one that would not diminish with time, and would convey their reputation both to their contemporary peers and to generations to come.[24] As a consequence the production of this literature was marked by the tensions between the agendas of authors, patrons, and readers—a tension that is particularly clear in the case of didactic literature written by men but aimed at women. The obvious tension between pedagogical models that limited female agency and denied political power, and reality, where women including countesses, like Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, and queens, like Maria de Luna, Isabel the Catholic, Catalina of Habsburg, and many others, had an important role in government, is explored in this book.

Didactic/Conduct Literature: Contextualizing Female Virtue

There was a proliferation of didactic literature—also called "conduct" and "courtesy" literature—across the Europe of the late Middle Ages, aimed at both women and men. A didactic text is intended to teach, advise, edify, and

23. Aristotle, *Nicomachean Ethics,* IV:83 and 89.

24. Sanxa still appears as a dedicatory figure in the first Castilian translations of the work (those made either for Isabel the Catholic or during her time), and was excised by the translator/author of 1542, who makes reference only to Catalina, queen of Portugal, in this context. *Carro de las donas,* 1:127–47; hereafter *CD.*

moderate the reader's behavior.[25] In other words, it relates to character. A conduct book, on the other hand, represents a broader category relating to either action and appearances or internal qualities. Some conduct books were also, in effect, courtesy books, and this is natural, given that outward appearances and inner character were seen as being related and mutually indicative. Good behavior was seen as proof of good character.[26] The war, famine, and plague of the mid-fourteenth century heralded an age of tremendous crisis and a radical reordering of social and economic relations. Conduct books became important at this time because they served to systematize social and religious codes of behavior in a period of great instability and turmoil, in terms of theology, religious devotion, social structure, and identity, and those anxieties show in the texts.[27] These works were already extremely popular and circulated widely in manuscript form. When the printing press was introduced, the genre exploded and reached a much wider audience.

The didactic tradition was quite diverse and included many other genres in addition to conduct and courtesy books, such as "mirrors of princes and princesses," sermons, proverbs, letters, fables, collections of exempla, moralizing tales, and treatises on vices and virtues.[28] Yet there was not a clear distinction between genres, and moral conduct books also incorporated spiritual and devotional elements. Moreover, their authors were also concerned with entertaining their readers and with the aesthetic value of their works.[29] Nevertheless, despite the diversity, importance, popularity, and diffusion of these genres, and notwithstanding the evident value that contemporary patrons and readers placed on them, these texts have been almost entirely excluded from the literary canon, and are typically relegated to the category of "minor genres." However, it is precisely these types of texts that allow us to gauge the connection between literary texts and their practical applications—obviously an important measure of the impact of literary works. These texts can also help us to distinguish between those ideas and mores that were prescriptive and those that were descriptive. As will be seen in the course of the present work, the texts of Eiximenis and those he inspired were intended to be prescriptive and had the specific aim of reforming and refining readers' behavior, but in fact, readers regarded them as descriptive and consumed and

25. Feros Ruys, "Introduction," 5. For an introduction to medieval didactic literature in the Spanish context, see Haro Cortés, *Literatura de castigos.*

26. Dronzek, "Gendered Theories," 137.

27. Ashley and Clark, Introduction, x.

28. Regarding the treatises of virtues and vices, see Newhauser, *The Treatise on Vices,* passim; and Newhauser, *The Seven Deadly Sins,* 1–17.

29. Weber, "Religious Literature," 150.

digested them in different ways. For example, Eiximenis tailored his tone and content to the status and position of his intended audience—his patronesses and their circles; but his actual readership—which came to be much wider than he could ever have imagined—interpreted his work according to their own various proclivities.

This was the way this type of literature tended to be read, and one can observe the same disjuncture in the work of contemporaries, like Christine de Pizan. She dedicated her *Livre des trois vertus* (*Book of Three Virtues*) specifically to Isabeau de Bavaria, queen of France, but it enjoyed a far broader, and less refined, reading public.[30] Moreover, Eiximenis's texts were appropriated and transformed by his translators and adapters, who had their own agendas, and their own intended audiences, thus introducing another level of ambiguity as a consequence of their production.

Didactic literature, and particularly that devoted to women, tended to be very practical, and was rooted in certain concrete traditions. Medieval and early modern ideas about gender and virtue were based, on the one hand, on biblical imagery and exegesis and, on the other, on Christianized versions of classical philosophy and natural science (particularly medical theory). Among the basic assumptions relating to anatomy and physiology that were current among contemporary scholars was the belief in a binary opposition in which men were both different from and superior to women. Aristotle conceived of men as being intellectually and morally superior to women, who were seen as "incomplete men"—a proposition he was confident could be proven by observing the male gender in nature. Hence, he concluded, the will of nature was that men should dominate women.[31] This position was Christianized by theologians such as Thomas Aquinas, who tempered it by noting that women could not be dismissed as a defective species—given that they had been created by God—but that their role was secondary, and therefore, they had to be subject to male control.[32] Likewise, in Aristotle's *Nicomachean Ethics,* virtue emerges out of the equilibrium—the Golden Mean—between two opposites. For instance, the characterization of women as less rational than men meant that in order to advance in a male-dominated world, they

30. Krueger, "'Nouvelles choses.'"

31. Further proof of male superiority can be seen in the importance given to the male in reproduction. Semen—the masculine essence—was seen as active, whereas the female's role was seen as passive. Women merely provided the material and vessel that facilitated the reproductive process. Following Avicenna's revision of Aristotle, Albertus Magnus ceded women an active role in reproduction, but one that was subsidiary to the male. See Cadden, *Meanings of Sex Difference,* 21–26.

32. "Women is by nature subject to Man, because in Man there is by nature a greater abundance of the discretion of reason." Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, q. 92, a. 1. Cf. Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* III, q. 32, "De conceptione Christina quod activum principium."

had to either adhere to a very particular model of virtuous womanhood or give up most aspects of their gender in order to become more masculine, and therefore, more rational. As Judith Butler has noted, gender is performative: "the body becomes its gender through a series of acts which are renewed, revised, and consolidated through time," and "it is real only to the extent that it is performed."[33] Likewise, because males were seen as superior, in order to become virtuous, medieval women could strive to become more masculine (which is to say, rational) by curtailing their femininity, and all that this implied. They had to become less woman-like. Indeed, the etymological root of "virtue," the Latin *virtus,* is *vir,* or "man"; "virtue" signified "manliness," or "courage."

Nevertheless, virtue was not held to be the exclusive realm of men—this was hardly possible within a Christian tradition that emphasized the superlative virtue of certain women, notably the Virgin Mary. If women could be virtuous, however, it was not in the same way as men. Virtue, even more than gender, is performative and constructed, and emerges out of repetition and expectations—and the expectations for women were distinct from those for men. In this era, virtue was understood to be established and reinforced through the repetition of righteous and honorable acts, and was reflected in proper behavior and proper appearance. As Thomas Aquinas put it, virtue is not a quality, but a "habit" (*habitus*): "a habit perfecting man so he may act well"—this is how virtue was understood in the Latin reading of Aristotle's *Ethics.*[34] Or, as the sociologist and critic Pierre Bourdieu proposed much later, in the 1980s, "habitus" is a sort of socialized norm or tendency that guides thinking and behavior, it is delimited in a field, and changes over time. It is, in his words, "a durable, transposable system of definitions" assimilated initially by children as a result of the conscious and unconscious practices of their families.[35]

Medieval proper behavior and character were rooted in the model of the four cardinal virtues (moral and human), which included temperance, courage, justice, and wisdom (or prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice), although some authors also included magnanimity, humility, and patience as

33. Butler, "Performative Acts and Gender Constitution," 523 and 527. Her ideas on performativity are further developed in her book *Gender Trouble.*

34. Pansters, *Franciscan Virtue,* 26, 29, and 32 (citation).

35. Bourdieu and Wacquant, *An Invitation to Reflexive Sociology,* 134. As Zander Navarro, one of his interpreters, put it, "[Habitus] designates not only the foundational basis of practices but also the analytical objectives of circumventing the impasse versus objectivism." Navarro, "In Search of a Cultural Interpretation," 16.

virtues.[36] Of course, this was not a medieval novelty—the four virtues came from the Greek and Roman philosophical tradition. Plato mentions the cardinal virtues in *The Republic,* and Saint Augustine in his Platonism imagined them to be manifest in heaven as modes of loving God.[37] Plato's disciple Aristotle developed his own theory, which he lays out in the *Nicomachean Ethics,* and in his *Politics,* works that were highly respected in the Middle Ages, and were translated into Latin around 1246–47 and 1265, respectively.[38] Other influential Hellenistic ideas regarding virtue include Xenophon's *Cyropaedia,* or *Education of Cyrus,* in which the King of Persia was presented as a model of self-control, modesty, and decorum. Similarly, Cicero's *De officiis* (*On Duties*) emphasizes decorum—understood as self-control and self-consciousness—as the quality that enables men to eschew and avoid "effeminate" ways.[39]

A key innovation of Christianity vis-à-vis the classical position was to transform virtues from abstract moral values into instruments of salvation—a concept completely foreign to Aristotle's thought. Another novelty was the addition to the canonical cardinal virtues of specifically Christian theological virtues (biblical and divine): faith, hope, and charity (*fides, spes,* and *caritas*). But virtues were not merely religious in orientation; they were also intrinsic to the notion of legitimate political power, whether exercised by men or women.[40] However, there was no precise or "orthodox" definition of rulerly virtue; hence, the differences in various *specula principum* (mirrors of princes), which tended to be composed with the specific circumstances of a particular court in mind, to be read within a precise circle of patronage and clientele, and to be dedicated to a particular king, queen, prince, or princess. Finally, in the later Middle Ages, a new concept of virtue developed: the idea of *virtus politica,* or "political virtue," which was also particularly relevant to rulers.[41] By the thirteenth century, the category of *virtus politica* was understood to have three distinct meanings. It functioned at times as a synonym for the cardinal virtues; it was used generically to refer to virtues in general; and, in some contexts, it was comprehended as referring to virtues relating specifi-

36. Pansters, *Franciscan Virtue,* 33.

37. Lombard, *Sententiae,* II:188–89 (III.XXXIII.3); Augustine, *De Trinitate,* XIX, 9 (50A, 438–39).

38. Aristotle's virtues included courage, temperance, liberality, magnanimity, pride, sincerity, distributive justice, corrective justice, and equity. Pansters, *Franciscan Virtue,* 9 n. 31. See also Buffon, "The Structure of the Soul," 14.

39. See Burke, *The Fortunes of the Courtier,* 11.

40. Bejczy and Nederman, *Princely Virtues,* 4.

41. The term does not appear in classical Latin and patristic sources, except for Macrobius's commentary on the *Somnum Sicipionis.* From the twelfth century some hagiographies included the political virtues as described by Macrobius. See Bejczy, "The Concept of Political Virtue," 9.

cally to politics.[42] On the other hand, the principal Franciscan virtues were charity, obedience, goodness, truth, faith, humility, joy, poverty, penance, and peace.[43]

Such was the intellectual landscape of virtue at the time that Eiximenis wrote his *Llibre de les dones* and the *Scala Dei*. For women to establish a recognized claim to the possession or embodiment of virtue was a sort of first step toward their incorporation into society as full members, and queens—as the correspondence of Maria de Luna, Isabel the Catholic, and Catalina of Habsburg shows—were particularly aware of this fact. It was in the late Middle Ages that ideas of feminine virtue, the didactic genre, and the medium of the book converged to teach women how to overcome vice and to approach God. With the novel element of female patronage of these works, individuals, both secular and religious, were able to lay claim to virtue and, therefore, to take on a more active role in society and politics. In order to understand how actual women, like those for whom Eiximenis's books were written, or to whom they were dedicated and translated—Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, Maria de Luna, Isabel the Catholic, and Catalina of Habsburg—received these prescriptions and went on to remodel them, and how contemporaries understood these works, it is necessary to understand their historical context. Advice to kings was not given lightly in the Middle Ages, and queens and aristocratic women were also regarded as eminences; what was said to them and how they reacted to it were matters of great importance. Books of counsel and advice were a well-established and respected genre in the Middle Ages and early modern period; they provided a legitimate and acceptable manner of criticizing the most powerful elements of society through appeal to scripture and the use of exempla and figures drawn from the Bible, history, and literature that could be applied as parables to contemporary situations and controversies.

This book was inspired by certain themes that began to draw my interest while I was writing my first monograph, *Power, Piety, and Patronage in Late Medieval Queenship: Maria de Luna* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2008). That book was a study of medieval queenship, an examination of the nature and role of feminine authority and power and the monarchy in the late Middle Ages. Based primarily on archival documentation, it focused on the life and career of the countess and magnate Maria de Luna, who in 1396

42. Bejczy, "The Concept of Political Virtue," 15; Skinner, *Visions of Politics;* and Viroli, *From Politics to Reason of State.*

43. Pansters, *Franciscan Virtue,* 45.

ascended unexpectedly to the throne of the Crown of Aragon as queen consort of Martí I (1396–1410), and served as his lieutenant general (second in command) until her death in 1406. *Power, Piety, and Patronage* analyzed the career of Maria de Luna from a variety of approaches, uncovering the networks of patronage that sustained and reinforced her authority, and thereby demonstrated that "political" actions in the Middle Ages cannot be understood as unrelated to religious, cultural, and familial activities. The "political" was merely one dimension of the broader activities of the royal or queenly court. *Chariots of Ladies,* on the other hand, turns to cultural history, and specifically to issues of cultural production in the context of the royal court, especially the matter of female patronage of feminine conduct literature, with an eye to both audience response and authorial intentionality. The models of womanly virtue that Eiximenis proposed may initially have been intended for his specific patronesses, and the narrow readership of the courtly aristocracy, but they soon took on a life of their own. And, whereas a man may have formulated them, it was largely thanks to networks of female patrons and readers—queens, noblewomen, and nuns—that they owe both their longevity and their wide geocultural dissemination. Indeed, the interplay between the agendas of these women, who were striving to establish their own political power within a misogynist culture that sought to deny them this capacity, and those of Eiximenis and his emulators, who were aiming to entrench their own personal positions, and to promote the style of devotion championed by the Observant Franciscans, is what drove the creation and dissemination of this literature.

The present book consists of two parts: "Genesis" and "Afterlife." Part 1 examines the context of Eiximenis's works at the time and in the environment in which he was crafting them: the aristocratic society of the late-fourteenth-century Catalan regions of the Crown of Aragon. Part 2 analyzes his work's reception, adaptation, and translation in the Castilian and Portuguese royal courts of the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries. In general, the content and the exemplary models put forward by Eiximenis and similar authors are contrasted with the actual experiences of the noblewomen and queens who were behind the dedications, who owned and most likely read those works, and who were contemporaries of the authors and adaptors. Chapter 1, "A Return to Piety: Eiximenis and the Culture of the Late Medieval Catalan Court," examines the author himself, his circle, and the cultural, literary, and social contexts in which his particular type of didactic literature emerged. In chapter 2, "Noble Inspiration: Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós and the *Book of Women*," I historicize the *Llibre de les dones*—a work that is read in a very particular light when the lady to whom Eiximenis dedicated the book, Sanxa

Ximenis d'Arenós, Countess of Prades, and the complicated circumstances of her life are considered. Chapter 3, "Fit for a Queen: The *Scala Dei,* Franciscan Queenship, and Maria de Luna," follows the same line, but in regard to a new patroness in whom Eiximenis wanted to inculcate a model of "holy Franciscan queenship." It was in Maria de Luna's royal court that Eiximenis expressed his ideas in a form that constitutes an enduring model of Christian queenship and devotion.

Part 2 begins with chapter 4, "Found in Translation: Isabel the Catholic Reads Eiximenis." Here I examine those of Eiximenis's texts that were translated from Catalan into Castilian (Spanish), in order to understand why and how certain texts were taken up at the court of the Catholic Kings, and what the impact of Catalano-Aragonese culture in Castile was. On the one hand, Isabel the Catholic ordered a Spanish translation of the *Llibre de les dones,* and on the other, Eiximenis's *Scala Dei* was drawn on by religious reformers from García Jiménez de Cisneros to Ignacio of Loyola. Other texts, like Eiximenis's *Vita Christi* and the *Book of Angels* also became very popular in Castile. It was in the fifteenth century that Eiximenis became more of an Iberian phenomenon. The fifth and final chapter, "Eiximenis on the Atlantic: The *Chariot of Ladies* and Catalina of Habsburg," analyzes a new appropriation and translation of the text, one that combined the *Llibre de les dones* with new material developed by the new translator, taken in part from Joan Lluís Vives's *De institutione feminae christianae* (*On the Education of a Christian Woman*) and other sources, so as to serve both a queen of Portugal, Catalina of Habsburg, and her daughter, Maria Manuela of Portugal (the first wife of Prince Felipe of Asturias, later Philip II of Spain), as well as other Habsburg women, and the broader female audience in the mid-sixteenth century. Analyzing these additions in the light of the advantages and difficulties that royal women faced in this new era can help us appreciate the changes in gender discourse that took place in the transition from the Middle Ages to the early modern period, and reconsider questions such as that proposed in 1977 by Joan Kelly: "Did women have a Renaissance?"[44]

This book will help us understand how these women, from Sanxa Ximenis to Princess Maria Manuela, negotiated social norms and exercised agency, and the role that they played in shaping contemporary notions of gender and power, and how male writers, advantaged in gender but lower in status, tried to further their personal and institutional agendas by insinuating themselves into the good graces of these women. In conclusion, together the five chapters of this book trace not only the transformation of specific works of

44. See the conclusion, note 64.

literature, but the evolution of gender discourse and notions of virtue and propriety from the 1390s to the 1550s, throwing light on women's concept of virtue, models of queenship, and men's view of women at the dawn of the modern era. In the process, this book illuminates the work of a medieval Catalan writer who was well known and influential in his time, but whose importance has been obscured by the modern construction of canon, while addressing issues at the heart of literary creation and dissemination—the tension between the various agendas, explicit and obscure, of both authors and their patronesses—showing how the idealization of female conduct changed over time and how it related to those same historical women who were supposed to read those texts.

Chapter 1

A Return to Piety

Eiximenis and the Culture of the Late Medieval Catalan Court (The Crown of Aragon, 1327–1409)

> And the first rule is that a man must never appear to be ignorant in front of his wife, but rather he should give her to understand that he knows infinitely more than he seems to, but what he withholds or does not mention, he does so out of love for her, since he does not wish to grieve or to afflict her and thinks that she will work it all out herself little by little.
>
> Francesc Eiximenis, *El dotzè* (*Dotzè del Crestià*, 539, ed. Renedo and Guixeras, *Francesc Eiximenis*, 94)

Who was this Francesc Eiximenis, this friar who authored one of the most enduring treatises of female behavior of the late Middle Ages—a text that crossed borders, cultures, and languages over the course of more than two centuries? What type of cultural, religious, and social environment produced him and his work? What drove Eiximenis, and what were the agendas that informed his oeuvre? And how did these compare to the expectations and ideals of his contemporaries? This chapter aims to answer these questions, reconstructing the networks Eiximenis moved in and the relationships he cultivated, his ties to the royal house, and his desire to reform the Franciscan movement in an age of religious decadence and a schismatic church, torn between the papacies of Rome and Avignon. In the process, it will throw light on the rich and complex literary history of the Crown of Aragon, and the history of the Iberian Peninsula of the late fourteenth century.

Eiximenis may be a fairly obscure writer today—so much so that several of his major works remain unpublished and can be read only in manuscript form—but in the late Middle Ages and the early modern period, he was a widely read, well-known, and respected figure. Although his work included a whole range of genres, from political theory to theology, Eiximenis preferred to compose didactic treatises in prose to address what he regarded as

the pressing moral and religious issues of the day. He embraced the Stoic ideal that viewed writing as a practice designed for the cultivation of virtue and the care of the soul, and therefore conducive to the complete abolition of desire. The link between the search for truth and reading the Bible and other religious texts has been part of the fabric of Christian culture from the earliest days of the church.[1] As a Franciscan, Eiximenis knew well the monastic culture of the late Middle Ages and the fundamental connection between reading, writing, and experience. His style was clear, easy to understand, and appropriate to his aim, which was the education and edification of lay readers, nobles, and nonnobles alike. As he put it in several of his works, including the first book of his monumental *Lo Crestià* (*The Christian*), writing "may serve learned and lettered persons, but I intend here to speak principally to people who are simple, and lay folk, and who are not highly educated."[2] Likewise, in the second chapter of his *Llibre dels àngels* (*Book of Angels*) he explained, "Thus, our intent is not to speak in a complex manner, nor a subtle, nor an artificial one, nor to high clergymen, but rather to simple and devout people."[3]

And while it is true that Eiximenis wrote some treatises in Latin—particularly those that he composed specifically for ecclesiastic use, which included treatises on sermons and preaching—most of his work was written in his native Catalan. This was the popular vernacular and preferred language of the dynasty of the count-kings of the House of Barcelona, who ruled the Crown of Aragon from its foundation in 1137 until the death of Martí I in 1410. Over the course of the fourteenth century, Catalan had become the language of the royal administration and the parliament (*corts*) and would remain the language of the court even after the Castilian Trastámara dynasty took over in 1412. It would only be displaced at the royal court by Castilian (Spanish) after 1469, when Ferran d'Aragó, later known as Fernando the Catholic, married Isabel of Castile, and moved his base of operations to her kingdom. Thereafter, his own realms were ruled for the most part through the medium of lieutenants, or viceroys he directed from Castile. "Ferran" became "Fernando," and left his Catalan behind.

Eiximenis's work makes manifest an encyclopedic knowledge that he deployed enthusiastically in his mission to popularize lay devotion and to make theology palatable to common Christians. His works, as Andrés Ivars

1. Stock, "Reading, Ethics," 4.

2. Barcelona, "Fra Francesc Eiximenis," 195. The original, now archaic, form of the title is *Lo Crestià;* some modern editors prefer the current form, *Lo Cristià*.

3. BAM: *Llibre dels àngels,* Inc. Sig. 4° 102, Barcelona: Iohannem Rosembach, 1494: f. 2v. Cit.: M. de Riquer, *Història de la literatura,* 2:146.

and Martí de Riquer have observed, can be divided into four main categories: theological, moral/political, pious essays written in the vernacular (which is to say, Catalan), and doctrinal texts in Latin.[4] Works of the latter category, such as Eiximenis's *Pastoral*—a book of advice for priests and bishops that he dedicated to Hug de Lupià, bishop of Valencia—were intended for the ministry. Likewise, his *Psalterium laudatorium* (*Laudatory Psalter*), a devotional work for clergy, was dedicated either to Pedro de Luna ("Papa Luna," the Aragonese antipope who ruled at Avignon as Benedict XIII) or to Berenguer de Ribalta, bishop of Tarazona, depending on the manuscript.[5] His *De triplici statu mundi* (*Concerning the Tripartite State of the World;* c. 1378–79) dealt with the Apocalypse, and was inspired by visionaries such as Joan de Rocatallada, Arnau de Vilanova, and Joachim da Fiore—all of who were embroiled with the Avignon papacy that Eiximenis would eventually support.[6] Finally, his *Ars predicandi populo* (*Art of Preaching to the People*) is the most pedagogical among his writings. It is a manual that teaches preachers how to preach and also focuses on the use of mnemonics for the congregation.[7] Only fragments of Eiximenis's *Summa theologiae* have been preserved.[8]

On the other hand, Eiximenis's Catalan-language theological works, notably, the *Llibre del àngels* (c. 1392) and the *Vida de Jesucrist* (*Life of Jesus Christ*), became his most popular. Both the *Llibre del àngels* and the *Vida de Jesucrist* were dedicated to Pere d'Artés, a patron Eiximenis fawningly referred to as "the very honorable and wise knight."[9] D'Artés was the treasurer (*mestre racional*) of the Crown of Aragon during the reigns of Martí I and his predecessor and brother, Joan I (1387–96), and served alongside Eiximenis in Maria de Luna's council, after she had been appointed as lieutenant general of the Kingdom of Valencia. The *Llibre del àngels* was a voluminous treatise, comprising 201 chapters. As the first of its kind, it helped entrench in contemporary Europe the popularity of angelic devotion, and, particularly, the figure of the Guardian Angel—the protector of cities, kingdoms,

4. M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:133–96; Ivars, *El escritor,* 117–19.

5. The *Psalterum laudatorium* and the *Expositio in psalmos poenitentiales* were translated into Catalan in his own time by Guillem Fontana. See M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:330; Barcelona, *Fra Francesc Eiximenis,* 477–82; and Eiximenis, *Psalterium,* ed. Wittlin.

6. Ivars, *El escritor,* 117–18; Hauf, "El de triplici statu mundi," 265–83.

7. Rivers, "Memory and Medieval Preaching."

8. Hauf, "La *Vita Christi,*" 37.

9. BHUB: Ms. 86, Eiximenis, *Llibre dels àngels,* f. 1r. Lobbying important members of the court was common. For instance, the Dominican writer and translator Antoni Canals, who was also part of the royal entourage, dedicated his translation of the *Liber de modo vivendi* (*Carta de Sant Bernat a sa germana*) to Galceran de Sentmenat, Martí I's chamberlain. See an edition of the text at Bofarull y Mascaró, *Documentos literarios,* 415–647.

and the individual faithful.[10] Indeed, this became Eiximenis's most popular book, and was translated into Latin, Spanish, French, and Flemish. There are sixteen extant manuscript copies in Catalan, and fifteen more (now lost) are attested, in addition to which three survive in Latin, seventeen in French, and four in Castilian. Many printed editions of the work were produced as well: two in Catalan (Barcelona, 1494), four in Castilian (Burgos, 1490 and 1517; Alcalá, 1527; and Barcelona, 1641), four in French (Geneva, 1478; Lyon, 1486; and Paris, 1505 and 1518), and one in Flemish (Brussels, 1518).[11] The *Vida de Jesucrist,* written around 1397–8, weighed in at 691 chapters, and was intended for lay readers with the aim of providing a model for devotion both to God and to the Virgin Mary. It was influenced by earlier vitae, such as Ludolf of Saxon's *Vita Christi* and Ubertino da Casale's *Arbor vitae crucifixae* (*Tree of Life of the Crucifix*).[12] Later it would be translated into Castilian by Hernando de Talavera, Isabel the Catholic's confessor and the first archbishop of Christian Granada (see chapter 4), as well as into French. It too would be published in print. Eiximenis's pious treatises followed the same thread as these theological works, but were more practical and prescriptive in their orientation. The most notable among these is his *Scala Dei,* which is one of the subjects of the present study, while others include the *Cercapou* (a book on confession) and the *Art de ben morir* (*Art of Dying Well*), a translation of the *Ars moriendi*.[13]

Among his major moral/political compositions figure the *Llibre de les dones* (analyzed in chapter 2) and his most ambitious enterprise, the unfinished masterwork *Lo Crestià*—a work intended to explain everything that it was necessary to know about the Christian religion in order for both clergy and laity to live pious and devout lives. The plan was for this project to span thirteen volumes, but it seems that Eiximenis produced only four, known as *El primer, El segon, El terç,* and *El dotzè*.[14] *El primer* (*The First* [volume of *Lo Crestià*]; c. 1379–81) serves as a 381-chapter introduction to Christian

10. Eiximenis's definition was the following: "The angel is spiritual, and incorporeal of nature and substance, rational, always in perfect motion, unblemished, righteous and without fault, frank in judgment and virtuous, immortal, impassive and unmoved, persevering in the service of God, wherein it is ever appointed." [BHUB: Ms. 86, Eiximenis, *Llibre dels àngels,* f. 1v.]

11. Barcelona, "Fra Francesc Eiximenis," 207–12.

12. Hauf, "La *Vita Christi,*" 37–64. See also a partial edition of the *Llibre dels àngels* in Eiximenis, *De Sant Miquel Arcàngel*.

13. Ivars, *El escritor Fr. Francisco,* 119.

14. In addition to the manuscript versions, four books were edited in the fifteenth century: *El primer* in Valencia in 1483 by Lambert Palmart; *El segon* in 1499 also in Valencia by Cristofor Cofman (Kaufmann); a part of the *El dotzè* was edited in 1484 in Valencia by Lambert Palmart; *Regiment,* ed. Brines, 15–19. There is no complete modern edition of these texts, except for the *Dotzè llibre del Crestià*. See also Hauf's *Lo Crestià*.

religion and morality, and was dedicated to King Pere the Ceremonious (r. 1336–87). The second volume (*El segon;* c. 1382–83) consists of 239 chapters on temptation, the third (*El terç;* 1384), a voluminous 1,060 chapters on sin, and the last, *El dotzè* (*The Twelfth*; 1387–91), is a monumental treatise on government resembling in many places a "mirror of princes." The remaining nine volumes of *Lo Crestià* were never completed.

Eiximenis was a busy man. Not only was he heavily involved with political and ecclesiastical commitments; he was also writing other books. Some of these were also major literary achievements, while others were variations on themes developed in *Lo Crestià*. For example, his *Tractat d'Usura* (*Treatise of Usury*) resembles *El terç,* although the surviving parts make it clear it was, in fact, a distinct work.[15] The four volumes of *Lo Crestià* were particularly popular in Valencia, where they were made available to any and all who wanted to read them—a copy was kept chained to a table in the main chamber of the palace of the *jurats* (the city councillors).[16] *El dotzè* generated such interest that thirty-nine of its chapters (chaps. 357–95) were excerpted and expanded to form a treatise known as the *Regiment de la cosa pública* (*Ruling of the Republic*)—a work that was read widely and eventually issued in print.[17] Indeed, Eiximenis dedicated the *Regiment* to the *jurats* of Valencia, with the professed aim of helping them rule their city.[18]

Eiximenis was, above all, a pragmatist and a man of the world. While living in Valencia he was an energetic adviser to the *jurats,* and served as a member of Maria de Luna's regency council, during her tenure as lieutenant general of the kingdom from 1402 to 1406. Eiximenis was involved in all sorts of projects and initiatives. He helped to reform the regulations governing the city schools, he was one of the examiners of the Hebrew books found after the brutal pogroms of 1391, and he served as legate (*comissari apostòlic*) on a crusade against the Muslim pirates of the Maghrib launched by the Valencians and the Mallorcans.[19] Together with his colleague, the Dominican friar Antoni Canals, he advised the king and queen on the matter of the Western Schism—when there were popes in both Rome and Avignon. Through all of this, he was apparently an active and popular preacher, although only part of

15. Hernando Delgado, "El Tractat d'usura."

16. A document dated 18 May 1384 notes payments made for parchment, for the copying of the books, and for the chain used to tied them down. AMV: Claveria Comuna, 13, 1; cit. Massó i Torrents, "Les obres de Fra Francesc," 691; Eiximenis, *Regiment,* ed. Brines, 11.

17. Wittlin, "L'edició del 1499," 441–54.

18. M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:323.

19. See Barcelona, "Fra Francesc Eiximenis," 192. Regarding Eiximenis's views on Jews, see Viera, "Sant Vicent Ferrer"; Viera, "The Treatment of the Jew," 203–13.

his corpus of sermons has survived. In other words, his nonliterary political and religious activities mirrored his literary interests: a concern for society in all of its facets, and a commitment to cultivating popular piety.[20]

His writing was rooted firmly in the Bible, the writings of the church fathers, history, and his own experience, and he peppered his prose with illustrations drawn from all of these. On the other hand, like most Franciscan writers, he rejected the more extreme aspects of speculative theology. Nevertheless, the arguments he deployed in the service of clarifying what he considered to be Christian truths and fundamental moral principles were quite detailed and subtle. Like a good preacher, he effectively used little narratives to illustrate abstract points. Many were quite entertaining, and here he drew on his rich repository of fables, tales, and anecdotes concerning historical figures. He did not hesitate to use irony and even satire—humor, for him, was an effective tool of catechism.[21] While most of his prose pieces are long and rather ponderous expositions on faith and morality, many others show great dynamism, eloquence, and wit.[22] As a matter of course, he substantiated every proposition with an enormous weight of authority, whether biblical, theological, scientific, or philosophical. This was characteristic of his time, given that medieval textuality did not emphasize citation for attribution (a modern concern), but to lend authority. In sum, his oeuvre demonstrates that he was a sophisticated and erudite thinker. He was extremely well-read, and was determined to make himself understood by a wide audience. And for all of this, he was a success, given the many manuscripts and printed editions of books that were produced and survive.

That said, he was never as popular or acclaimed as Ramon Llull (1232/3–1316), who is considered the "creator" of the Catalan literary tradition, and who alone composed over 250 works in Catalan, Latin, and (so he claimed) Arabic. Over 2,000 manuscripts containing Llull's works survive, together with many early modern printed editions, and translations into Occitan, Castilian, French, Italian, Scots, and English.[23] Llull was a Franciscan tertiary, who traveled all over Europe and the Mediterranean with the aim of converting Jews and Muslims to Christianity. Eiximenis, on the other hand, does not seem to have been interested in conversion—he saw himself serving the existing Christian community. Like Llull, however, he became a widely recognized authority early in his career, and so was able to build his later works

20. Cervera Vera, *Francisco de Eiximenis;* Vila, *La ciudad de Eiximenis.*
21. Viera, "L'humor," 159–75.
22. M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:313.
23. Dagenais, "Medieval Spanish Literature," 45.

around ideas laid out in his earlier compositions. In this sense, Eiximenis can be compared to some extent to his contemporary Jean Gerson (1369–1429), the French theologian and chancellor of the University of Paris, who was also a very prolific writer, was actively engaged in the problems of the church, and served as a royal adviser (in his case, to the court of Charles VI of France).[24] Gerson was a contemporary of Christine de Pizan (c. 1364–1430), and participated alongside her in the *querelle de la rose,* the literary controversy surrounding Jean de Meung's misogynistic *Roman de la Rose.*

Eiximenis also bears some resemblance to two other very popular contemporary religious figures: the Franciscan preacher Bernardino de Siena and the Dominican Vicent Ferrer. Both were immensely influential political and religious figures, and both were canonized soon after death. Like Eiximenis, Bernardino de Siena (1380–1444) was a moralist who joined the Observant Franciscans in 1403, and contributed to the movement's expansion. In his preaching, Bernardino employed an air of simplicity, similar to that used by Eiximenis in his prose—as the Sienese preacher insisted, "clearly, clearly" (*chiarozo, chiarozo*).[25] Bernardino's style resembled that of Vicent Ferrer (1350–1419), a miracle-working Dominican from Valencia, who was esteemed by both royalty and the masses, and was canonized in 1455.[26] Eiximenis must have known Ferrer personally, and well, given that they would have coincided in Valencia when Ferrer came to preach in his hometown, to attempt to pacify the feuding endemic in the city, or simply to advise the city councillors or the monarchs. But while Ferrer was committed to a very aggressive program of preaching to convert Muslims and Jews and to excite Christian devotion, Eiximenis was more willing to find middle ground and avoid polemic.[27] Such is the literary legacy of Francesc Eiximenis; however, his work cannot be understood without placing it also in the context of his own life, his cultural background, and the environment of the court in which he spent his productive years.

Eiximenis: A Life

Francesc Eiximenis was born around 1327 in Girona, a provincial town and episcopal see in northern Catalonia (some 100 km from Barcelona). At this time all of the Catalan territories were under the jurisdiction of the

24. Hobbins, *Authorship and Publicity.*
25. Bolzoni, *The Web of Images,* 124.
26. Ackerman Smoller, *The Saint and the Chopped-Up Baby.*
27. Ysern Lagarda, "San Vicente Ferrer."

County of Barcelona—which was one of the many titular dependencies of the kings of Aragon. Indeed, Barcelona was where the male lineage of the dynasty originated, the city was its functional capital, and Catalan the native language of the kings. Eiximenis was not a nobleman; he came from a merchant family—part of the same emergent bourgeoisie that he often praised in his more politically oriented books. Unfortunately, we do not have much information about his early life or his family. Jill Webster and Jaume Riera have pointed out that he was related to the Mallas of Barcelona, the family that would produce the influential theologian Felip de Malla (1370–1431), who was well connected with the royal house from the time of Martí I.[28] Eiximenis was ordained a friar at the Franciscan convent of the city of Barcelona on 22 December 1352. After that, he pursued his training, roaming all over Europe, and staying at convents and universities in Paris, Cologne, Oxford (c. 1362), the Auvergne, and Italy, as well as at the papal court of Avignon (1365).[29] Through these travels he acquired an eclectic, cutting-edge education. At Oxford, for example, he came in contact with the thought of two fourteenth-century Franciscans, William of Occam and John Duns Scotus—leading lights of contemporary philosophy. He acquired their works for his personal library, along with those of other scholars associated with Oxford, including Adam Wodeham, Adelard of Bath, Alexander Hales, Hugh of Newcastle, Joan Dumbleton, and John of Wales.[30] But those trips also gave him a great deal of material to use in his books, in which he loved to recount his own experiences and impressions, and report unusual and amusing rumors, legends, and folk stories.[31]

Eiximenis completed the first phase of his studies in 1374, when he obtained a degree of *mestre de teologia* (doctor of theology) from the University of Toulouse. It was in the final years of his studies there that he embarked on a close, lifelong relationship with the count-kings and queens of the House of Barcelona—the rulers of the Crown of Aragon. The monarchs

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28. Riera i Sans and Torrent, *Diplomatari,* xii–xv.

29. M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:315–16. See also Cabré, "British Influence," 33–34; Brugada Gutiérrez and Guillem, "Francesc Eiximenis a Oxford," 47–82; and Vila, "El viatge d'estudis," 265–67.

30. An inventory of Eiximenis's books can be found in Monfrin, "La bibliothèque de Francesc Eiximenis (1409)," 447–84. See Cabré, "British Influence," 29–46.

31. For instance, having visited Cologne, Eiximenis recounted with innocent credulity the legend of Saint Ursula and the 11,000 martyred virgins: "Get yourself to Germany and you will see great marvels: for in Cologne, if anyone buries any creature great or small in the cemetery of the church where the eleven thousand virgin women lie buried, the earth will spit them out, unearthing them. This I learned when I went there from those nuns who live in that convent where the said virgins lie." M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:317.

had been long supporters of the Franciscans, who were prominent at their court, and whose services they preferred as confessors.[32] King Pere the Ceremonious showed great interest in Eiximenis's career at this early stage, to the extent that in 1373 he wrote to the dukes of Anjou and Armagnac, asking them to pressure the chancellor of the University of Toulouse to make sure that Eiximenis completed his degree quickly.[33] Likewise, Matha d'Armagnac, who was married to Pere's son and heir, the *infant* (prince) Joan, wrote four times to the chancellor repeating the same request.[34] Pere and his queen, Elionor de Sicilia, also supported Eiximenis's studies at Toulouse with grants and bursaries.[35] The king, the queen, and the *infanta* were all eager to have Eiximenis back to their realms, but they wanted him to come back as a doctor of theology.[36] And as soon as he completed this degree, he finally returned home and, following his powerful patrons' recommendations, settled down in the Franciscan convent of Barcelona. He apparently remained in the capital from 1377 to 1381, although occasional visits to other Catalan convents are attested for the period.

Those were very difficult years for Pere the Ceremonious, who was witnessing his power and authority as king contested by his own sons and the upper nobility of his realms. They did not much approve of the aging monarch's new marriage to his lover, Sibil·la de Fortià, who had already given him a daughter by the time of their wedding. The opposition to the match was not based on moral grounds, but on issues of class and status. The various parties had harbored no resentment toward Sibil·la as long as she had been Pere's lover—in fact, many regarded it as beneficial to king and kingdom. Nor did the birth of an illegitimate daughter provoke their opprobrium. Rather, it was the fact that Pere had presumed to transform his illiterate concubine, a member of the lower Catalan nobility, into his queen, that scandalized them.[37] The marriage, which took place on 11 October 1377, left the king isolated—it was largely boycotted by the upper nobility. Further, only two

32. López, "Confesores de la familia real de Aragón," 145–240 and 289–337.

33. M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:136–137; Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 2:244–45, doc. CCLV (Barcelona, 25 April 1373); 248–49, doc. CCLXII (Barcelona, 5 August 1373); 249, doc. CCLXIII (Barcelona, 1 September 1373); 254–55, doc. CCIXX (Valencia, 25 March 1374); and 168, doc. CLXXVI (Barcelona, 3 August 1373).

34. Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 1:270 (25 March 1373); Ivars, *El escritor,* 52 (25 March 1373 and 1 May 1373); and Riera i Sans and Torrent, *Diplomatari,* 9, doc. 11 (1 May 1373).

35. M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:136.

36. Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 1:244–45, 248–50, 254; and 2:168; M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:316–17.

37. Regarding Queen Sibil·la, see Silleras-Fernandez, "Money Isn't Everything," 80–111; Roca, "La Reyna empordanesa," 9–211; and Boscolo, *La Reina Sibil·la de Fortià.*

days after the ceremony, the *infant* Joan wrote a letter to the councillors of the city of Barcelona regarding this issue, sending Eiximenis as his envoy, and instructing them that the friar was speaking with his full confidence: "Thus, as he has been fully briefed by us, you will place him in your full faith."[38] Less than a month later, on 20 November, King Pere donated the substantial sum of five hundred gold florins to his favorite friar.[39] It was obvious that Pere and his son each wanted Eiximenis on their own side in the controversy. Four years later, Pere the Ceremonious prepared a magnificent coronation ceremony for Sibil·la in an effort to legitimize her status as queen in the eyes of the truculent nobility and his own disapproving children. The coronation, which was held in Zaragoza on 31 January 1381, was poorly attended, a fact that only underlined the degree to which the old king—then, fifty-three—had become alienated from his more powerful subjects. Through all of this, Eiximenis remained on Pere's mind, and on 17 May the king, still in Zaragoza, dispatched a letter to Eiximenis, requesting that the friar remain in Barcelona until he had completed his magnum opus, the encyclopedia of devotion and morality that Eiximenis called *Lo Crestià*.[40] It was for all this that Pere the Ceremonious was publicly acknowledged in the dedication to the first book of the series: "By command of the most powerful high and powerful prince, Lord Pere."[41]

Eiximenis in Valencia

Eiximenis, however, was a clever, practical, and prudent individual, and he saw the dangers of being too closely associated with an aging king who was hardly a model of morality and public virtue himself, and who was also locked in a bitter and open dispute with nearly the whole of his upper aristocracy, including his own son and heir. But for that matter, it would have been risky for Eiximenis to abandon his patron, Pere, and to position himself on the side of the *infant* Joan. The old king certainly still had some

38. ACA: CR, reg. 1744, f. 79r (Girona, 13 October 1377); Riera i Sans and Torrent, *Diplomatari,* 11, doc. 14.

39. ACA: CR, reg. 1259, f. 109r (20 November 1377); Riera i Sans and Torrent, *Diplomatari,* 11, doc. 15.

40. ACA: CR, reg. 1272, f. 54v (17 May 1381); Riera i Sans and Torrent, *Diplomatari,* 14–15, doc. 20.

41. Barcelona, "Fra Francesc Eiximenis,"198. A few months later, most likely on 6 November, a partial transcript of a letter, sent from Zaragoza by Pere the Ceremonious to his *religiosi et dilecti* (religious and dear) Francesc Eiximenis, shows that the king was also interested in his service as a confessor. Surprisingly, the document is not recorded in its entirety, and as a consequence the precise nature of the king's request is not clear. In any case, Eiximenis did not become the royal confessor.

bite left in him, and he had a famously vengeful and choleric temperament. Moreover, Eiximenis did not particularly approve of Joan and his second wife, Violant de Bar; he considered the pair frivolous. Hence, in 1384 he refused Joan's invitation to appoint him as his and Violant's personal confessor. This was a position of great power and influence, yet Eiximenis declined nonetheless.[42] Joan, however, was insistent, and wrote to Tomàs Olzina, the Provincial Minister General of the Franciscan order, asking him to order Eiximenis to comply: "You ought to make him obey by virtue of his holy [vow of] obedience, because there is no excuse for him not to be in our presence."[43] The Franciscans were well aware that Violant de Bar was a very important adviser and confidante to Joan I, and when the provincial master of the Franciscans wanted to request something from the king he did not hesitate to ask the king and queen's confessors to petition both of them.[44] So this appointment was no small matter. But to no avail: Eiximenis would not accept the appointment, and in order to avoid offending the *infant,* Olzina himself took up the position of Joan and Violant's personal confessor.[45]

Little surprise, then, that at the first opportunity, Eiximenis left Barcelona, and the embattled royal family, for the safety of Valencia—a wealthy and dynamic city not far from the itinerant royal court, where he was also highly esteemed. Documents show that by 1382 he had installed himself in the Franciscan convent there; the city would remain his primary residence until 1408, the year before his death. Andrés Ivars suggests that Eiximenis moved to Valencia because the councillors of the city (*els jurats*) had a general policy of trying to attract important religious figures, including individuals of the stature of Vicent Ferrer, and his disciple Antoni Canals—both of whom were also influential in the royal court. In addition, Ivars suggests, Eiximenis had probably been appointed executor for the portion of the will of the magnate Vidal de Vilanova that had been bequeathed as alms to the local Franciscan

42. In his request to Eiximenis, Prince Joan mentioned that his confessor had died, and insisted that he wanted him by his side five days before Christmas Day of 1384 because he intended to confess to him on Christmas Eve. ACA: CR, reg. 1748, ff. 118v–119r (Girona, 15 November 1384); Riera i Sans and Torrent, *Diplomatari,* 21, doc. 30 (15 November 1384). See also other related documents: Riera i Sans and Torrent, *Diplomatari,* 22, doc. 31 (16 November 1384) and 23, doc. 34 (6 December 1384); M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:318; Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 1:325; Pou i Martí, *Visionarios,* 566.

43. Riera i Sans and Torrent, *Diplomatari,* 23, doc. 33 (18 November 1384).

44. The letter written to Martí by P. Marí, provincial master of the Franciscans, reads: "And I have instigated, together with others, that is, with the confessors of the lord-king and the lady-queen, that the lord-king might be of mind to lend you help and aid, and it seems to me that there is good-will on his part [and he will do so] unless bad people get to him." See Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 2:335, doc. 348 (Valencia, 12 October 1393?); cf. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 33.

45. Riera i Sans and Torrent, *Diplomatari,* 24, doc. 35 (17 December 1385).

convent.[46] On the other hand, Jill Webster and Curt Wittlin suggest that Eiximenis came in response to disturbances at the local Franciscan convent in 1392.[47] In fact, Eiximenis most likely used some or all of these reasons as an excuse to avoid having to take sides in the dispute between Pere and Joan, and to remove himself from Barcelona without provoking either one.

From that point on, Eiximenis's strategy with respect to the royal family would be to remain close at hand, but not too close. Familiarity, after all, breeds contempt. Thus, he showed himself willing to serve them as both a formal and an informal counselor, and as an envoy for them within the Crown of Aragon, but he never allowed himself to get personally embroiled with them. He never served as a confessor to anyone in the royal family, and—although he was an occasional guest—he never resided at the royal court. Whatever he thought of the merits and virtues of particular rulers, in Eiximenis's political and moral discourse, monarchs were legitimate rulers, and underpinned the social order that supported their authority, if this were exercised in God's name. And this was recognized by individual rulers, who as a consequence, legitimized his discourse, and repaid his support by appointing him to powerful advisory positions, and by assigning endowments and donations both to him and to the causes he supported, including his own order, and the church itself.[48]

Whatever his motivations, Eiximenis unarguably ended up making Valencia his base, and it was here that he composed almost all of his literary works. His life, however, was far from cloistered, and he became closely involved in the municipal government. At this time, Valencia was developing as a booming commercial center; by the mid-fifteenth century its wealth and importance would surpass that of the capital, Barcelona, the decline of which would be sealed by the disastrous consequences of a civil war (1462–72). It was from the era of Eiximenis and through the fifteenth century that Valencia also became a very important literary center, and the point of origin for a new style of Catalano-Valencian vernacular literature. This "Valencian prose" (*prosa valenciana*) was characterized by a heavy grandiloquence, a weighty rhetorical style, and an exaggerated and contrived elitist idiom. Its practitioners prided themselves on the use of complex syntactic structures, and the deployment of paraphrases and excerpts from classical literature that were often left in their original Latin. It attracted the leading lights

46. Ivars, "El escritor."

47. Eiximenis, *Psalterium,* 7; and Webster, "Fra Francesc Eiximenis," 339–50.

48. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 130; Viera, "Francesc Eiximenis and the Royal House of Aragon."

of contemporary literature as well as rather more obscure authors—Ausiàs March (1397–1459), Joan Roís de Corella (1435–97), Jaume Roig (d. 1478), Joanot Martorell (1413–68), and the Clarissan nun Isabel de Villena (1430–90).[49] The city was also home to writers who did not engage in this style, most notably the famous humanist Joan Lluís Vives (1493–1540), who was born in Valencia to a Jewish family that had been forced to convert to Christianity shortly beforehand.

During Eiximenis's lifetime, however, both the city and the kingdom were violent, fractious, and divided. A major problem was factional feuding (*bandositats*), which was carried out by the leading noble families of the kingdom and their dependents. As the Solers and the Vilaraguts faced off against the rival Centelles clan, ties of consanguinity, marriage, patronage, and obligation extended the struggle through the whole of Valencian society. Artisans, peasants, and slaves all found themselves swept up in a self-perpetuating spiral of violence and revenge. The prosperity, peace, and stability of the city were under grave threat, and became a serious preoccupation for and drain on the energies of the monarchy.[50] Eiximenis, who by inclination and birth sympathized with the industry of the Catalan bourgeoisie, naturally took the side of the merchants and artisans, and attributed the civil unrest to privileged and unproductive nobility. Idle hands were said to do the devil's work, and, thus, Eiximenis was very much against indolence, and a champion of industriousness (within the established class and gender order of the day, of course). The challenges of dealing with this unrest, which Eiximenis blamed on privileged outsiders, was a catalyst for his development of the notion of the "public government" (*cosa pública*). In the *Regiment de la cosa pública,* the 1383 treatise he dedicated to the *jurats* of Valencia, he defined "public government" as "any community of folk united and living under the same law, and lordship, and customs, whether this is a kingdom, or a city, or a town, or a castle, or any similar community which is comprised of more than one household."[51]

In Eiximenis's ideal, this "republic" comprised the worldly community and the *corpus mysticum,* the "body of Christ" that incorporates all members of society, both cleric and lay, that are under the church. For Eiximenis, pragmatist that he was, human government was inseparable from either the church or morality. Tellingly, the treatise was excerpted from his magnum opus, *Lo Crestià,* and it was here that he outlined his most applauded paradigm for government: the *pactisme* (compact). Eiximenis believed that

49. Rubió i Balaguer, *Humanisme i Renaixement,* 39; Silleras-Fernandez, "Paradoxes humanistes."
50. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety and Patronage,* 94–107.
51. M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:365; *Regiment,* ed. Molins de Rei, chap. 1:39.

to function effectively government had to be established on the basis of a "compact," an agreement between the ruler—who had to be subordinated to the law of God and the influence of the pope in order to avoid tyranny—and his subjects. For him, the ideal monarch was a holy king, like Saint Louis IX of France (1214–70).[52] Eiximenis was certainly a sophisticated political theorist, but he was no Machiavelli.

His theories also bear the clear mark of his experiences in the Crown of Aragon, the dynastic aggregate where, in order to be recognized and crowned in the various constituent realms, kings first had to swear to observe the laws and privileges of the kingdom in question, and were dependent on the will and assent of the estates (assembled at the *corts*) to raise tax revenue thereafter. Thus, his positions resonated with the agenda of a powerful municipality like Valencia, whose councillors relied on Eiximenis to undertake a series of political and religious programs, and provided generously to him and his foundations in exchange, particularly in the period 1383–91, and after 1396. In sum, Eiximenis's move away from Barcelona and the court of the king did not represent a retreat from politics or even a loss of influence within royal circles; it freed him from royal influence and allowed him to cultivate an independent power base. Moreover, if he would not go to the royal court, the court would come to him, both as a result of the peripatetic character of the monarchy, which could be counted on to circulate through Valencia as it orbited the Catalan-ruled kingdoms, and in the form of his patroness, the queen, Maria de Luna, who was a major seigneur in the kingdom in her own right, and was appointed Martí I's lieutenant general of the kingdom in 1401.

Court Culture in the Reign of Joan I and Violant de Bar

Pere the Ceremonious died in 1387 and was succeeded by his son, Joan I. Eiximenis's relationship with the new king and his French queen, Violant de Bar, was not always easy. The Franciscan, along with many of his contemporaries—not to mention the royal counselors of the cities of Barcelona and Valencia—considered the couple rather irresponsible, too in love with French styles, and neglectful of the affairs of state. This is reflected in a short anonymous chronicle of the king's reign, written shortly after his death, in which he is called Joan the Careless (*el Descurat*). Later, he would be referred to as

52. Hauf has pointed out that Eiximenis follows the *Communiloquium* of John of Wales, who himself follows John of Salisbury's *Policraticus.* See Hauf, "Eiximenis, Joan de Salisbury," 168–71. See also Viera, "Francesc Eiximenis's Concept," 130–41; Maravall, *Estudios de Historia,* 393–412; and Webster, *La societat catalana,* passim.

"the Lover of Gentility" (*l'Amador de la Gentilesa*) in reference to his courtly tastes, but the name that stuck was "the Hunter" (*el Caçador*)—whether in reference to his passion for the hunt, or his not entirely unsuspicious death from an accident suffered while in lone pursuit of a deer.[53]

Joan's court became something of a salon for Catalan writers, who, like Eiximenis, served as informal counselors or held formal positions in the royal chancery. The Dominican author and translator Antoni Canals, for example, was a fixture. A disciple of Vicent Ferrer (and a fellow Valencian), Canals was noted among contemporaries for translating the works of classical authors, including Seneca (*De providencia)* and Valerius Maximus (*Dictorum factorumque memorabilium*), as well as those of more recent, religiously oriented authors, such as Saint Bernard and Hugh of Saint Victor. Yet he also adapted authors like Petrarch (part of his *Africa* became Canals's *Scipió i Aníbal*), and composed his own moralistic and devotional treatises, including his *Treatise on Confession* (*Tractat de confessió*) and *Ladder of Contemplation* (*Scala de contemplació;* 1398–1400) for Martí I.[54] Canals's agenda was to fight against the current of immorality he perceived in some of the more fashionable literature of his time, but instead of rejecting the offending authors and genres, he set out to translate into Catalan those among them who did indeed have a clear moral program and position. This sets him apart from Eiximenis, who as a Franciscan and Scholastic, was not drawn to dabble in the prehumanism that was attracting so many of his contemporaries. Nor was Canals's approach exhaustive and encyclopedic, as Eiximenis went to pains to show his own was. Eiximenis's goal was to produce works that conveyed a clear and easy-to-understand moral recipe; he was not interested in translation or adaptation. A partial inventory of Eiximenis's own library reveals that the Franciscan was not a great reader of the classics (aside from some Aristotelian commentaries). His predilection was for religious texts; he had an impressive patristic collection as well as around forty commentaries on Peter Lombard's *Libri quattuor sententiarum* (*Four Books of Sentences*) by different authors.[55] All in all, 171 books are listed, and if we take into account that the content of one

53. Joan I was given the nickname *lo Descurat* (the Careless) in a very short anonymous chronicle written between 1416 and 1438. See *Crònica del regnat de Joan I,* 15. At the end of the fifteenth century Gauberto Fabricio de Vagad called him *el Cortés* (the Courtly, or the Courteous). See Vagad, *Crónica de Aragón,* f. 159r. In his *Recort* (1476), Gabriel Turell called him *l'Amador de la Gentilesa* (the Lover of Gentility). See Turell, *Recort,* ed. Bagué, 180. In his chronicle, Pere Miquel Carbonell settled on *lo Descurat* (Carbonell, *Chroniques de Espanya,* f. 204r). On the other hand, his love of hunting has led many twentieth-century historians to call him *el Caçador* (the Hunter). See Tasis, *Pere el Cerimoniós i els seus fills,* 168.

54. Avenoza, "Antoni Canals i la traducció de Valeri Màxim: una primera aproximació," 89–102.

55. Monfrin, "La bibliothèque," 448 and 450–51.

of the boxes is missing from the inventory, we can assume that Eiximenis had more than two hundred manuscript volumes in the library of his convent in Valencia, where he wrote most of his books.

Along with others members of the chancery and the court, Eiximenis and Canals lived what Antoni Rubió i Lluch called the first period of "Catalan Humanism," spanning the reigns of Joan I and Martí I.[56] Rubió i Lluch conceded that true humanism did not develop in Catalonia until the reign of Alfons the Magnanimous (1416–58), but considered Joan I a humanist, given his "love for the Classics."[57] The principal figure of this prehumanist period, as some have qualified it, was Bernat Metge, the courtier who in 1388 translated Petrarch's *Griselda* (itself an adaptation of the final tale in Boccaccio's *Decameron*) into Catalan to serve, perhaps, as an "exemplary tale on marriage."[58] In his dedication to the translation, made for Isabel de Guimerà, daughter of Berenguer de Relat, treasurer of the queen, Elionor de Sicilia, Metge declared that Petrarch "would live forever in the world because of his fame and because the important books that he wrote for our instruction."[59] In fact, Metge's translation represented the first version of a work by Petrarch in any peninsular language. Hence, he is credited by Jordi Rubió i Balaguer with initiating the "Italian Renaissance" in Catalonia.[60]

But the work that has been widely heralded as Metge's major contribution to humanism is *Lo somni* (*The Dream;* 1398–99). Although this text is considered a classic of Catalan medieval literature today, it was not widely read, either during Metge's lifetime or in the succeeding centuries. Only three manuscript copies are extant, and it was not printed until the nineteenth century.[61] *Lo somni* is a rather complex text, written as a philosophical and moral dialogue, in imitation of classical authors such as Plato and Cicero. In the first two books of the work, Metge, writing in the first person, while dreaming, encounters his deceased patron, Joan I, serving time for his venal sins. Metge speeds along the king's redemption by letting himself be cured of his skepticism regarding the soul's immortality. In exchange, the spectral king pardons the author for any responsibility regarding his own

56. Rubió i Lluch developed the historiographical concept of "Catalan Humanism" in two articles: "El Renacimiento clásico," and "Joan I humanista." For the controversy regarding the notion of early humanism in Catalonia, see Silleras-Fernandez, "Paradoxes humanistes."

57. Rubió i Lluch, "Joan I humanista," 2.

58. Tavani, "La Griseldis de Petrarca," 99–104; and Butinyà Jiménez, *Del Griseldis català al castellà;* M. de Riquer, "Boccaccio en la literatura," 451–71; Rubió i Balaguer, *La cultura catalana,* 219–47.

59. Pere de Pont, royal scribe, in a letter to Lluís Carbonell, who was the secretary of the bishop of Girona, was the first one who praised Petrarch; see M. de Riquer, *Obras de Bernat Metge,* 49–50.

60. Rubió i Balaguer, *Humanisme i Renaixement,* 29–30.

61. Silleras-Fernandez, "Paradoxes humanistes"; M. de Riquer, *Obras de Bernat Metge,* 190–94.

demise, which he characterizes as fortunate, given that it led to the placing of his brother Martí—a superior king—on the throne, as a consequence.[62] The author's blatant sycophancy is excusable given his circumstances: there were many who did indeed blame him and Joan's other counselors for the king's death and the parlous state he had left the realm in, and Metge had to scramble to gain the graces of the new king, whom he had previously treated with obvious and public disdain, back in the day when no one would have suspected that Martí would ever come to the throne.

Over the last two books of *Lo somni* Metge converses with two mythical Greek figures: Orpheus, in the third book, and Tiresias, in the fourth. In his conversation with Tiresias, Metge attacks the blind seer's misogynistic attitudes in a lively dialogue rich in irony. In the course of this defense of women, Metge draws on the examples of women from the past, including figures from the Bible, literary characters (such as Griselda, a sort of female Job figure, who appears first in Boccaccio, and then in Petrarch and Chaucer, among others), and contemporary Aragonese queens, including Elisenda de Montcada, Elionor de Sicilia, Elionor de Xipre, Sibil·la de Fortià, Violant de Bar, and Maria de Luna—not all of whom were, in fact, considered paragons of virtue in their day. For the substance of the dialogue of Tiresias, Metge turns again to Italian literature, and Boccaccio, in particular, borrowing the defenses of women directly from *De mulieribus claris,* and the attacks on them in the *Corbaccio.* Indeed, Metge was very much like Boccaccio, not only in his appropriation of the Italian humanist's style and ideas, but because he too was a complex author who does not fit easily into the rigidly defined categories of the Middle Ages or the Renaissance.

Metge chose to write this work in Catalan, and not in Latin, most likely because the point of the literary exercise was at bottom to redeem himself in the eyes of Martí and his powerful queen, Maria de Luna. He was not only seeking clemency, but, if at all possible, an official post in the new administration.[63] To this end, *Lo somni* was a success; in 1402, six years after Joan's death, Martí I allowed Metge to return to the royal chancery, and by this time he had already been absolved of the accusations of embezzlement of funds and treason that were pending against him and other counselors of the deceased king. His rehabilitation would be complete in 1405, when Martí I

62. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 52–54; M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:140.

63. Among scholars of Metge, Cingolani has most strongly rejected the notion of a political motivation as underlying *Lo somni*. See the introduction to his edition of Bernat Metge, *Lo somni,* 42–43.

commissioned him to be one of his secretaries.[64] In a sense, Metge was like Eiximenis; both moved comfortably in and around the royal house, and both used Catalan to reach a wider audience. But while the Franciscan's goal was the moral improvement of society, the courtier's agenda revolved around his own political advantage and his literary aspirations. Catalan was the language they each chose because it was the preferred language of the royal family and, therefore, was the "official" language of the court. It was the most common language of royal correspondence and accounting.

However narrow his immediate goals may have been, Metge's literary activities contributed to the entrenchment of a more sophisticated and worldly courtly culture in the royal household—and it was specifically this culture that Francesc Eiximenis and other contemporary moralists were reacting against. Metge's first patrons, Joan and Violant, were not so interested, perhaps, in the day-to-day politics of the realm, but they were both very cultured rulers, fascinated by literature and music, and they tried to make their court a place where both were practiced and appreciated. Already during the reign of Pere the Ceremonious there was an obvious interest in French literature at court; the king bought French versions of Arthurian romances, and there were Catalan translations of French titles, such as *Lancelot en prosa* (the *Prose Lancelot*), *Lancelot i Carados, Tristan de Andorra,* and *Tristán de Cervera,* along with the *Queste del Saint Graal,* in his library.[65] Catalan literature traditionally developed in close contact with Occitan literary forms, and Catalan poets and troubadours, like Guillem de Berguedà and Cervería de Girona, had been composing poetry in Occitan since the twelfth century. In fact, the first count-king of Barcelona, Pere the Ceremonious's great-great-great-grandfather, Alfons the Troubadour (also known as "the Chaste"; 1165–96), composed poems in "langue d'Oc" himself, and hosted a court that featured both Occitan and Arabic jongleurs. The House of Barcelona was a branch of the Bellonid dynasty, which had ruled Catalonia and Septimania since the ninth century; until the mid-thirteenth century, the count-kings were the feudal overlords of the Counties of Foix, Toulouse, and Provence and other Occitan territories. Hence, it was the vibrant Occitan literary tradition that dominated Catalan lyric until Ausiàs March transformed Catalan into a language of poetry in the fifteenth century.

In any case, Joan and Violant's deliberate reorientation of their court toward French tastes in entertainment and literature drove the moralists of

64. He appears in July 1402 as a chancery scribe, and in 1405 as the secretary of Martí I. M. de Riquer, *Obras de Bernat Metge,* 173.

65. I. de Riquer, "La literatura francesa," 117; I. de Riquer, "Los libros."

the royal entourage to despair, and provoked a reaction among the local aristocracy. The royal couple's project was to create a sort of literary court in imitation of the famous twelfth-century "courts of love" of Eleanor of Aquitaine (r. 1137–89) and her daughter, Marie of Champagne, and the cultural élan associated with the contemporary Occitania. The court of Marie de Champagne, which they sought to emulate, had been the environment that produced works like *De amore* (*On the Art of Courtly Love*), written by Marie's chaplain, Andreas Capellanus. Joan and Violant's initiative reflected a larger movement to revive courtly literature in France—one spearheaded by Violant's kinfolk, the great aristocratic dynasties of Bar, Berry, Bourgogne, and Anjou.[66] The queen's aunt was Isabeau de Bavière (r. 1387–1435), the wife of Charles VI (1380–1422), a queen who was very active in politics, particularly in her role as regent during the periods of her husband's incapacity. Isabeau is frequently associated with the Cour Amoureuse (Court of Love), an elaborate and ceremonial contest of poetry said to have been hosted in the late fifteenth-century French court—although it must be said, historians debate whether the contest existed as described, or is itself a literary fiction.[67] In any event, this was the general environment in France, in which writers such as Guillaume de Machaut (c. 1300–1377), Oton de Granson (c. 1340–97)—qualified by Christine de Pizan as the perfect knight, "courteous, genteel, valiant, handsome and graceful"—Pizan herself (1363–c. 1430), Eustache Deschamps (1346–1406), Jean d'Arras (fl. mid-fifteenth century), and Jacques de Longuyon (fl. c. 1312) thrived.[68] There was also a flourishing movement of translation in France, and it was via translation into French that works of classical literature were introduced into the Crown of Aragon, and thereafter translated into Catalan.[69]

Violant's correspondence also shows her as a key player in a network of readers including her French relatives and members of the Catalano-Aragonese nobility. They lent books back and forth, and many were copied in the royal chancery as they passed through the queen's hands. That was the case, for instance, with a copy of Machaut that Count Mathieu of Foix sent to Violant in 1389. Violant went on to lend the same book to her

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66. Cortijo Ocaña, *La evolución genérica,* 20; Cortijo Ocaña, "Women's Role." See also Andreas Capellanus, *De amore libri tres,* xii.

67. Adams, *The Life and Afterlife,* 150–51.

68. I. de Riquer, "Los libros"; Cortijo Ocaña, *La evolución genérica,* 20–21; Wollock, *Rethinking Chivalry and Courtly Love,* 59–60.

69. For example, Livy's *History of Rome* was read in a Catalan translation made from a French version by the Benedictine monk Pierre of Bersuire (c. 1290–1362), which he took, in turn, from Petrarch. Likewise, Vegetius's *De re militari* was translated into Catalan from a French version. See Badia, "Traduccions al català," 34–35; Rubió i Balaguer, *Història de la literatura catalana,* 1:176–77.

lady-in-waiting and confidante Carroça de Vilaragut. Soon after, Carroça sent for a copy of Capellanus's *De amore* on behalf of the queen, who later asked her to order a translation of it.[70] In the end, the book was translated into Catalan from the original Latin by a cleric who had been commissioned by Domenec Mascó, a Valencian jurisprudent who served as vice-chancellor to Joan I. Interestingly, this translation, titled *Regles de amor i parlament de un hom i una fembra* (*Rules of Love and Discourse of a Man and Woman*), omitted the *Reprobatio amoris* (*Reproof of Love*)—the section that Capellanus added to the end of his essay, which disingenuously recommended that the reader forget about Capellanus's writings on human love, and focus, instead, on love of God.[71] In 1380, Joan asked his mother, Elionor de Sicilia, to send him and Violant "the book of John Mandeville, and the romance of Machaut."[72] Nine years later, we have a letter from Violant to the Count of Foix, thanking him for lending her a copy of *Le voir-dit* (*A True Story*), Machaut's masterpiece on love.[73] Evidently she enjoyed it, given that the following year, before she returned it, the queen asked Carroça de Vilaragut to arrange for a copy to be made.

In sum, aristocratic women were just as active as noblemen when it came to creating and participating in networks that created and disseminated literary styles and tastes. Antonio Cortijo Ocaña, for example, has tied Violant de Bar's patronage to the development of the first "sentimental novels" in the Catalan context.[74] The first of these *novel·les sentimentals,* or *noves rimades,* was the anonymous *Stòria de l'amat Frondino e de Brisona* (*History of the Beloved Frondino and Brisona;* c. 1400), which Cortijo Ocaña situates in the same genealogy as the Castilian sentimental novels. The first of this genre in Castilian is considered to be *Siervo libre de amor* (*Willing Slave of Love*), written in 1439 by the Galician author Juan Rodríguez del Padrón (c. 1390–1450), who was active in the court of Juan II of Castile (1406–54). As for Portugal, the first example is *Sátira de infelice e felice vida* (*Satire of the Unhappy*

70. Cortijo Ocaña, *La evolución genérica,* 21; Pagès, *La poésie française,* 33; Cingolani, "*Nos en leyr,*" 49–51.

71. For Andreas Capellanus's definition of love, see Andrea Capellani/Andrés el Capellán, *De amore/Tratado sobre el amor,* ed. Vidal-Quadras, 54. For a different interpretation of Andreas's work see Andersen-Wyman, *Andreas Capellanus on Love?,* 1–34. Gimeno Blay studied the only Catalan manuscript of *De amore,* one that was made at the end of the fourteenth or the beginning of the fifteenth century. See Gimeno Blay, "El manuscrit II-3096," 179; and Cantavella, "Les anotacions marginals," 38–39. See also Viera, who understands Eiximenis's *Llibre de les dones* as a reaction to *De amore.* Viera, "Francesc Eiximenis, Courtly Love," 311.

72. "Lo libre de Johan de Mendrevile e lo romanç de Mexaut"; Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 2:225, doc. 238.

73. Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 1:361, doc. 404.

74. Cortijo Ocaña, *La evolución genérica,* 18–23; Cortijo Ocaña, "Women's Role"; Cortijo Ocaña, "La ficción sentimental."

and Happy Life; c. 1445–49) by Pedro, constable of Portugal. But it was in Castile where this genre became most popular in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, represented by authors such as Diego de San Pedro, whose *Cárcel de amor* (*Prison of Love;* 1492) became a sort of early modern best seller, and went on to be translated into several languages, including Catalan, German, French, and English. As early as 1493 it had been published in Catalan, and in 1496 Nicolás Núñez published a sequel, which was published alongside the original into the sixteenth century.

The Crown of Aragon was a multilingual environment: Catalan, along with its cognates, Valencian and Mallorcan, and Aragonese were the principal vernaculars and the preferred languages for personal correspondence, and Latin was generally reserved for writing important official documents dealing with administrative matters and some diplomatic correspondence, although Castilian, French, and Italian also appear in the chancery documents. By the time of Joan and Violant's reign, Catalan was clearly ascendant as the language of both the court and letters, although French literature was popular both in the original language and through the medium of Catalan translations that were circulating at least since the time of Pere the Ceremonious.[75] Whereas earlier Catalan literature had been heavily influenced by the culture of Occitania, since the Treaty of Corbeil in 1258, and the cession of Barcelona's lordship over almost all of its territorial claims north of the Pyrenees to Louis IX (1226–70), France had become the Crown of Aragon's new neighbor. This coincided with that kingdom's growing domination of the European high cultural scene, and, thus, French language and letters began to exercise a growing influence there. This trend became most evident with the *infant* Joan's marriage to Violant de Bar—who was related to so many of the leading French families. In 1380, when the new queen came to Barcelona, she could not yet speak Catalan. When she began to send letters back to her kinfolk exulting in her new kingdoms and the gentility of her husband, she almost certainly dictated these in French; it would have been a chancery scribe who rendered them in the Catalan in the copies that are preserved in the royal archive today.[76]

This reorientation of the local court culture toward French models did not go unnoticed by members of the royal entourage, some of whom undoubtedly felt threatened by this foreign intrusion and the effect it might have

75. I. de Riquer, "La literatura francesa."

76. For an example of one of the first letters written in Catalan that Violant sent to her family, see ACA: CR, reg. 1821, f. 15r (Barcelona, 29 June 1380), ed. Bratsch-Prince, *Vida y epistolario,* 60.

on the sovereign. Maria de Luna, Violant's sister-in-law and successor—and a native Aragonese—seemed to have felt this way; shortly after coming to the throne herself in 1396, she sent a dispatch to Richard II of England (1377–99) with the intention of distancing herself from her predecessors and marking a new era of Anglo-Catalan relations. Of Joan, she said, "He had a French wife and was completely Frenchified."[77] As it was, Maria's own mother, Brianda d'Agout, was a Provençal noblewoman, but she was not a member of the royal house, and Count Lope de Luna was no king, so her entrée into the Crown of Aragon did not provoke any sort of cultural recalibration. Violant, however, was not only the new queen; she hailed from the rarest heights of the northern French elite: she was the daughter of Robert, Duke of Bar, and Marie of France, the sister of King Charles V (1354–80). Thus, the marriage, and Joan's reign, nurtured a political rapport between the Crown of Aragon and France that encouraged and facilitated the transmission and adaptation of French culture.

It had not been meant to be. Pere the Ceremonious's major dynastic project was the recuperation and extension of Aragonese dominion over the western Mediterranean. Mallorca (which had been under a cadet branch of the House of Barcelona since 1276) was recovered in 1349, Sardinia and Corsica were invaded, and next, the king had set his sights on Sicily. This island, ruled by a branch of the royal family since 1282, was not to be taken by invasion, however, but by marriage.[78] The plan was for the *infant* Joan to marry his niece, Maria de Sicilia, the heiress to the throne of the kingdom. This was to be Joan's third betrothal. The first had been to Jeanne de Valois, the posthumous daughter of Philip IV of France (1328–50), but the princess died en route to Perpignan to celebrate the wedding in 1371. Two years later, Joan married another Gallic noblewoman, Matha d'Armagnac, but she died in 1378. This left Joan eligible precisely at the moment when Pere needed him to marry Maria de Sicilia. But the *infant* was determined to take another French bride, even against the wishes of his father; in 1380 he married Violant. Joan's determination to tighten relations between the Crown of Aragon and France

77. See Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 37–40; Eiximenis, *LD,* I:90–92, cap. LVI: "Con les maneres de les dones de altres nacions no són bones per tota part, e con és bo que les dones sàpien llegar." Eiximenis liked to point out what he did not like about places, and looked for similar examples in other geographies. See Wittlin, "El rei Pirro de Roma."

78. In the "Sicilian Vespers" of 1282 rebellious islanders overthrew their Angevin rulers and invited Pere the Great to become their king. His acceptance provoked an unsuccessful Crusade against the Crown of Aragon. When terms were reached in 1285 Pere agreed to the principle that Aragon and Sicily should not be ruled by the same king, although this occurred briefly for four years under Pere's son, Jaume II (king of Aragon, 1291–1327; of Sicily, 1285–95).

is also evident in the marriage choices he made for his own offspring, the two daughters (out of a total of twelve children) who survived past infancy. The eldest, Joana, his daughter by Matha d'Armagnac, was wed to Mathieu, Count of Foix, while the younger, Violant, was married to Louis d'Anjou, the son of Jean the Good of France (1350–64), and the claimant to an array of contest and symbolic titles, including King of Naples and King of Jerusalem.

These various marriages stimulated the exchange of artistic objects, books, and courtiers between the court in Barcelona and the royal and noble courts of France.[79] This only fed Joan's obvious Gallophilia, to which he gave full rein after his own accession to the throne in 1387. Most notably, he imitated the French custom in which the heir to the throne bore the title Dauphin (Delfí in Catalan).[80] This was obviously a deliberate affectation—for, in fact, the heir to the throne of the Crown of Aragon had already been given a special honorary title—Duke of Girona—one without any foreign overtones. He also imitated the custom of certain French kings, when he stipulated in his will that his body should be buried in one place and his heart and entrails in another. In Joan's case, he requested that his body be laid to rest in the monastery of Montserrat and his heart and entrails in the monastery of Poblet, the traditional pantheon of the Barcelona dynasty.[81] His very great affection for French literature was demonstrated when he brought the tradition of the Jocs de la Gaya Sciència ("Games of the Gay Science," also known as the Jocs Florals, or "Floral Games") to his realms in 1393. This was an annual poetry contest that had been established in Toulouse in 1323, at which troubadours recited their compositions, and the winner received a gilded flower. In Joan's version, reflective perhaps of Catalan frugality, it was a real rose that was given as the prize.[82] Courtly literature, and particularly the new French literature, were a passion that bound him to his wife, Violant, or as he called her, his "dear companion" (*cara companyona*).

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79. For instance Domenge Mesquida mentions that Jean de Berry asked Joan I for "three Muslim potters." Joan also sent him a magical stone (*betzar*) that was reputedly a cure for poison, along with two mules, five camels, and a copy of Marco Polo's book, while he asked Jean de Berry for four hunting dogs. Likewise, Joan I asked King Charles VI of France to exchange their *divisas.* See Domenge Mesquida, "Regalos suntuarios," 353–58.

80. Riera, "El delfinat."

81. This had been a common practice among French kings since the time of Louis VIII (1223–26). See Udina, *Els testaments,* 39.

82. The kings of Aragon sponsored this contest through the end of the fifteenth century. See M. de Riquer, *Història,* 1:565.

Eiximenis against the Court

This turn in aristocratic culture toward France, and the excesses it represented, could hardly go unnoticed by Francesc Eiximenis and other moralists of the time. Those who resided at the Catalano-Aragonese court, like Antoni Canals and Joan Eximeno, began to make subtle hints in their writing about their dissatisfaction with this transformation. This was part of what might be described as a low-level "culture war" being waged between the two literary parties at court. On one side were the royal secretaries and other members of the royal chancery, all laypeople. Metge epitomized this group: members of a clique of highly sophisticated individuals who worked in the Aragonese royal chancery—a bureaucratic institution that was exceptionally well organized for its time—and who both translated and composed original works. On the other side were those clergy with literary vocation, and whose training, traditions, and agendas were distinct from those of the courtiers. And just as Metge exemplified the former group, Eiximenis epitomized the latter; moreover, his determination and enthusiasm matched that of the royal secretary, but his aim was to stem rather than encourage the flow of the new humanism to the Catalano-Aragonese court.

Eiximenis's works reflect his distrust of the new French cultural models that were coming into fashion. The only positive thing he had to say about France was a prediction he made in 1385 in chapter 466 of the *Dotzè,* when he declared that all of the monarchies of Europe would disappear except for that of France. King Joan, however, was less than pleased when he read the passage in 1391, and the Franciscan hastily revised it in chapter 473.[83] But this imprudent prophecy was hardly characteristic of Eiximenis's impressions of French culture and tastes. We know that he spent extended periods in France while studying: he obtained his degree in theology at the University of Toulouse, and visited Paris at least once. However, while the city impressed him, it was hardly in a positive sense, given how he recalled it in *El terç* of *Lo Crestià:*

> The jongleur's verbal silliness is alive and well in France, especially in Paris, where you can see minstrels roaming the streets accosting people to hear their rhymes, with the result that, thus, the people who hear give them money, which is not a very honest way to live, since they are continually braying vanities and follies in order to spark carnal love and to stoke wordly vanity, which is what one hears here also.[84]

83. M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:138–40; see also Aurell, "Messianisme royal"; Rogers, "Francesc Eiximenis," 330–31.

84. M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:134.

For Eiximenis, France came to epitomize a kingdom that had lost its moral compass. Hence, in his *Llibre de les dones,* he laments "the Kingdom of France, how it has fallen and been brought down with such confusion and shamefulness and such dejection . . . they ought to entrust themselves to the 'Ecclesiastical Arm.'"[85] In what could have only been a rather daring and thinly veiled attack on the queen, Violant, the same book includes a lengthy section under the rubric "How the customs of foreign women are not wholly good, and why it is good that women know how to read."[86] The message here was that allowing foreign women to run the court could lead to the ruin of a kingdom and the extinction of a dynasty, but that women should be taught to read so that they can concentrate on devotional literature.

In order to demonstrate this, Eiximenis chose the case of Robert I, "the Wise" or "the Peacemaker of Italy" (king of Naples; 1309–43), a ruler whose kingdom was also infected by French styles and tastes. This, Eiximenis explains, came about thanks to the arrival of French noblemen and their wives in Naples. Within a short time the Neapolitan court, then the city, and finally, the rest of the kingdom started imitating all of the many vices of the French. They wore inappropriate clothes that were far too short and too tight, and women even began to reveal their breasts. But the change in fashion was only the surface of the problem—the symptom of a far more profound moral decline. The formerly virtuous Neapolitan women became "dissolute": they drank, danced, sang French songs, and began to ride horses sitting astride, like men. They were apparently kissing and hugging men constantly, talking endlessly of love, and indulging in repeated infatuations. For Eiximenis this sort of behavior could lead only to ruin. In the friar's words,

> During the era of King Robert, who was King of Sicily and of Naples, during our time, some noblemen from France came with their women and all of their households to Naples. And some of the aristocrats of Naples hastened to take up the fashions of those Frenchmen, that is, short and tight and very over the top, and so the women of the court and of the said city wanted to look like those French women who had come there, and go around in short and tight clothes like them, and dance all day, and drink in the street, and roam about like men, and kiss and embrace men openly in the street all day long, and gurgling away French songs, just as the noblewomen in France do, and talk of loves, and of infatuations, and take up with young men as they would do.[87]

85. *LD,* II:370–71.
86. *LD,* I:90.
87. *LD,* I:90.

According to Eiximenis, Robert's only saving grace was the fact that he had a good queen as his wife. Constança de Mallorca—wise and pious, famous for her saintly reputation—advised him to put a stop to this immoral behavior. Constança did her best to lead the women of the realm back to the path of righteousness: getting them to dress modestly, to cover their breasts, to honor their husbands and care for their children. She ordered them to attend church regularly and to come prayer book in hand, and to focus their gaze on the altar for the duration of Mass. Otherwise, she warned, God's wrath would be visited on them. But by this time the French vices had spread throughout the kingdom, and not even her husband, Robert, heeded her advice. As a result, Naples became a new Sodom and Gomorrah, and like its biblical precursor was destroyed by the wrath of God, which came in the form first of the king of Hungary, who invaded the kingdom, and next in the form of Louis d'Anjou, the son of Jean II of France, who claimed the throne of Naples and Sicily a few years later.

In fact, it did not happen quite as Eiximenis described. The queen he referred to as "Constança" was actually Sanxa de Mallorca, the daughter of Jaume II of Mallorca (1276–1311), and a very well-known protector and patron of the Franciscans. Under the rule of Robert I, the Kingdom of Naples actually prospered and became a center for artistic and cultural innovation. After he died in 1343, he was succeeded by his closest living descendant, his granddaughter, Joanna, who had been married by Robert to Prince Endre (Andrew) of Hungary (which was, like Naples, in the hands of an Angevin dynasty), but she ruled in her own right as sole monarch. In 1345, soon after Endre intrigued to ensure that he too would be crowned, a group of Joanna's supporters murdered him, and she regained sole authority. In 1352 an Angevin prince, Louis, became king of Naples—but this was Louis, prince of Taranto, Joanna's cousin and the second of her four husbands, all of whom she would outlive. In 1382 Louis, the son of Jean II, did indeed claim the throne of Naples, with the support of Joanna, who adopted him as son, and of the anti-Pope Clement VII. As a consequence, Pope Urban VI (1378–89) excommunicated Joanna, and bestowed the kingdom on another Angevin scion, Charles Durazzo—whom Joanna had earlier adopted and recognized as heir, then subsequently spurned. He seized the city, had Joanna killed, and took the throne as Charles III (1382–86). Louis d'Anjou's claim was never realized; he briefly held Provence, and invaded Italy, but died in 1384, a circumstance that permitted Charles to claim the throne of Hungary, which he ruled as Károly II until 1396, when he was assassinated on orders of the dowager of Hungary, Erzsébet (Elizabeth) of Bosnia.[88]

88. Erzsébet was herself assassinated in 1387. See Aurell, *The Plantagenet Empire,* 5.

This was certainly a history in which women played a very direct and active role, and in which the ultimate fate of Naples was instability and upheaval, but it was hardly the one that Eiximenis described. So why did Eiximenis view this as a proverbial example of political disaster, and why did he attribute it to the moral incontinence of "French women"? It is possible that Eiximenis viewed the whole affair with bitterness given that had Robert's male line continued, Naples would have been brought into the orbit, if not under the control, of Aragon (which would, indeed, come to pass in 1442). But this was not due entirely to a failure on the part of Robert to produce a son through Constança/Sanxa. By his first queen, the *infanta* of Aragon, Violant, Robert had produced a male heir; but their son, Charles, died in 1328, leaving only two daughters, the eldest of whom would become Queen Joanna. But Eiximenis was as determined to lionize the barren Sanxa as he was to vilify the French aristocracy, and she was featured again, in the *Dotzè,* and in the *Scala Dei.* Here she would appear again in the guise of "Constança"—a model of holy and temperate queenship intended for his new patroness, the queen of Aragon, Maria de Luna.[89]

As it was, Eiximenis was not the only literary figure of the time who regarded Robert of Naples with ambiguity. In cantos 8 and 9 of *Paradise,* Dante characterizes him—through the voice of the author's friend, the king's older brother, Charles Martel (who would have inherited Naples himself had he not died in 1294, aged twenty-four)—as petty, and better suited to oration than to kingship:

> His temperament, the mean descendant
> of a generous race, has need of officers
> who do not strive to line their treasure chests . . .[90]

and

> But you [Nature] will twist to some religious role
> a man [Robert's elder brother, Louis] who's born to buckle on the sword,
> and make a king of someone who should preach.
> And so your track goes wholly from the road.[91]

The poet Niccolò Rosso of Treviso called him "king of the cows," while Petro Faytinelli characterized him as the "lazy king," the effeminate "King

89. See chapter 3.

90. Dante, *Paradiso,* 75, Canto VIII:82–83.

91. Dante, *Paradiso,* 79, Canto VIII:144–48 ("borne" amended to "born"). See Kelly, *The New Solomon,* 1 and 274. Kelly cites the verses as VIII:87–89 and 151–55.

Bertha."[92] On the other hand, Petrarch, an author who was very close to Bernat Metge's heart, and who met the king during his visit to Naples in 1341, portrayed Robert in very positive terms. Petrarch mentioned him in two of the letters collected in his *Familiares* (*On Familiar Things;* 1345), saying, "He was wise, he was king, he was high-minded and gentle, he was the king of kings." Elsewhere, he refers to him as "the eminent king and philosopher, Robert, as famous for his culture as for his rule, and the only king of our age who was at once the friend of knowledge and of virtue," "the star of Italy and great honor of our century," and "the king of Sicily, or rather, if you consider true excellence, king of kings." The preacher Remigio de Girolami, the chronicler Giovanni Villani, and the Parmesan writer Gabrio de Zamorei concurred with Petrarch's view.[93]

Still, these were hardly disinterested opinions. Dante was a supporter of Henry VII (king of Germany, 1308–13, and Holy Roman Emperor, 1312–13), who was one of Robert's rivals, whereas Petrarch could hardly hold a low opinion of Robert when the Neapolitan king had been a sponsor of his acclamation as poet laureate. As it was, the most curious aspect of Eiximenis's portrayal of Robert and his queen is that the friar credited Constança/Sanxa with being the guiding force behind politics and piety in the kingdom, while he saw the king as passive and effete. Robert's successes were, for Eiximenis, wholly to his wife's credit. This runs contrary to Eiximenis's portrayal of Violant de Bar and her relationship with Joan I, which presents the queen as the source of the king's weakness; in fact, if there is a parallel in personality, it is between Constança and Robert and Maria de Luna and Martí I.

Of course, when Eiximenis was ostensibly writing about Naples in the 1340s, he was in fact describing how he saw the Crown of Aragon in the 1390s, where under the influence of Violant de Bar the same immoral Gallic trends that had corrupted and brought Naples low were being insinuated into the kingdom of Joan I. Hence, the parable of Robert of Naples appears not only in 1396 in the *Llibre de les dones,* but as early as 1386 in his treatise *Lo Crestià,* and in the *Scala Dei,* written in 1396–97. In each case the intended recipient of the book is significant. The twelfth volume of *Lo Crestià* was dedicated to Alfons, Count of Ribargorça and Denia and Marques of Villena, a cousin of Pere the Ceremonious, and one of the most powerful noblemen in his realms. The *Llibre de les dones* was written for Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, the wife of Joan de Prades, Alfons de Ribargorça's brother. Finally, the *Scala Dei* was written for the queen, Maria de Luna. In other words, Eiximenis

92. Kelly, *The New Solomon,* 274–75.
93. Ibid., 2 and 289–90.

was deliberately and systematically setting out to demonstrate the dangers of French fashions to the ruling elite of the Crown of Aragon. As he put it in the *Llibre de les dones,* "The Aragonese have always dressed in the fashion of Adam, which is wool and the skins of rams and sheep, without pomp or pride, and as such God has assured their prosperity in the past in many ways. But now they are adopting new styles. . . . Beware the wrath of God."[94]

The message was clear: adopt French fashion, and God will punish you. There can be little doubt that the Franciscan had Joan and Violant in mind when he fulminated against Gallic styles—they had been married since 1380—but he had the good sense to restrain himself once the couple came to the throne in 1387. The twelfth volume of *Lo Crestià* was written more or less the year before Joan's coronation, and until the king's death in 1396 and the succession of Violant's rival Maria de Luna, Eiximenis did not revisit the parable of Robert and Constança in writing. To do so during their reign would have undoubtedly brought down the wrath of the couple on Eiximenis personally, and may have well affected their support and patronage of his order. In the meantime, however, he continued his program against French-inspired laxities in the political sphere. In 1383, at a time when he was serving as a consultant to the city council of Valencia, the *jurats* drafted sumptuary laws limiting the sorts of clothing and jewelry members of the aristocracy could wear—restrictions that were intensified in 1388, most likely under the influence of Eiximenis.[95]

And it must be said, Violant de Bar and Joan I did indeed live up to Eiximenis's worst expectations in these respects. It was thanks to Violant, it was believed, that Joan had established a sophisticated, elaborate, and expensive-to-maintain French-style royal court in the Crown of Aragon, which was rather unsophisticated up to then. Both contemporaries and historians agree that Violant had a profound influence on Joan, who was by all accounts deeply attached to her, and she was her husband's most trusted adviser. He even appointed her as his lieutenant when he was anticipating leaving his kingdoms to lead a military expedition to Sardinia. She also had the reputation of being a spendthrift of extravagant taste, who frittered away the treasury on clothes, luxury items, and court festivities. The near-contemporary historian Pere Tomic, in his *Histories e Conquestes dels Reis d'Aragó e Comtes de Barcelona* (*Histories and Conquests of the Kings of Aragon and Counts of Barcelona;* 1438), noted, "It can be said with certainty that that king and the queen, his wife,

94. *LD,* I:92. He goes on to say that the Castilians are committing the same mistake: abandoning their traditional clothing in favor of French fashion.

95. Ivars, "El escritor," 200–201.

while both were alive, were the best appointed and had the greatest household of any king or queen known at the time."[96] Likewise, in the fourth book of *Lo somni,* in which Metge panegyrizes five queens of Aragon and one of Cyprus, he sings of Violant's extreme generosity—a characterization that can be read either as innocent praise of largesse or as an intimation of poor judgment and spendthriftiness: "The feminine character is naturally inclined towards greed, and contrary to this nature has been she who is the most generous that I have heard of to my memory. Busa Canesa, Quintus Fabius Maximus, and Julius, who by my reckoning were superlatively generous, were greedy in comparison to her. Her household has been, and remains, a temple of generosity, and the one most concerned with giving rather than receiving."[97]

Violant's spending habits became a political matter when the Estates of the Crown demanded, during the *corts* held at Monzón in 1388, that Joan reorganize the royal household. The king's subjects were alarmed at the royal couple's profligacy, which they claimed was driving the kingdom into bankruptcy and prompting tax hikes. Violant, rather than playing the role of the good and pious queen, "Constança," was in fact the source of this decadence. And things went from bad to worse. Just as had been the case in Eiximenis's imaginary Naples, the introduction of French styles to the Crown of Aragon heralded a moral decline among local noblewomen. It was at the same parliament that the powerful Alfons de Villena, for whose benefit Eiximenis had first described the decline of Naples in *Lo Crestià,* brought a formal charge of sexual misconduct against a prominent Aragonese noblewoman, Carroça de Vilaragut. Carroça was Violant's favorite and confidante, and she read and exchanged books with the queen. It was because of her proximity to the queen that Alfons de Villena had earlier approached her, seeking her help in his ambition to be appointed as head of the royal council—the Aragonese "cabinet." Apparently, Carroça refused, and Alfons, provoked into enmity, took his revenge by publicly accusing the lady of adultery and other scandalous and outrageous sexual offenses. As a result, Carroça became the scapegoat for the widespread dissatisfaction with Joan and Violant among the Estates. Thus, as sensational and hardly credible as they may have been, Alfons's accusations led to Carroça's expulsion from the royal court.[98]

But was Violant the corrupting influence that she was made out to be? Not really. When Violant arrived in the Crown of Aragon as the bride of

96. Tomic, *Històrias e conquestes,* chap. XLV: 224. Tomic wrote his book in 1438, but it was not published until 1490.

97. Metge, *Lo Somni,* IV: 244.

98. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 38–39; and Danvilla, "Biografía de la ilustre Na Carroça."

the heir, she was fifteen years old, and was certainly used to splendorous surroundings, having spent the previous few years in the royal court of her uncle Charles V.[99] And as to be expected, she was very cultivated; she was an avid reader and kept a rich library with many titles in French, her native tongue. She liked music and loved to dance, and she was accustomed to dressing in the luxurious styles of the latest French fashion. Not surprisingly, she had every intention of carrying the styles and manners to which she was accustomed to her new home. Nor was this remarkable for Aragonese queens, who by tradition had their own households and financial resources and who were accustomed not only to feel like queens, but also to look like them—decorating themselves and their courtiers in luxurious style.

The difference is, perhaps, that Violant (and Joan) were unable to live within their means. Their openhandedness went well beyond what was expected of them as rulers—which is to say, to show largesse to their aristocracy and generosity to the clergy—and their unbridled embrace of luxury was seen as inappropriate and intemperate, even for monarchs. Not only did they overspend, but they also surrounded themselves with dishonest counselors who were themselves embezzling the kingdom's money. It was this drain on the public purse that forced Joan to raise the taxes on the towns of his realms, which provoked the resentment of the municipalities and the nobility—two of the Estates. In the "pactist" Crown of Aragon, taxes could not be raised without the consent of the *corts.* Hence, the *jurats* of the city of Valencia did not hesitate to register in pointed tones their dissatisfaction with the king's habits. In 1396, shortly before the king would meet a sudden and unexpected end, they sent him a memo complaining about his style of rule and his choice of courtiers, and lamenting the fact that the king could no longer afford to "provide for his own table." They continued:

> And what is even more shameful, there are many days that the quartermaster (*comprador*) of Your household does not have the means to provide for Your table, and, even more seriously, that on many days there is not enough meat except for Your own plate, a state of affairs which is vituperous and brings great shame, because foreigners gossip about this and the merchants and others who travel outside of Your realms, they bring meat, saying that the King of Aragon cannot even feed himself.[100]

99. For a balanced and critical analysis of Violant's persona and reign, see Bratsch-Prince, *Vida y epistolario,* 18; Bratsch-Prince, "The Politics of Self-Representation"; and Bratsch-Prince, "A Queen's Task."

100. Roca, "Memorial de greuges," 75.

In sum, by 1396, for many of his subjects, Joan must have resembled Robert of Naples—seduced by immoral French fashions, surrounded by wanton noblewomen, and neglecting his responsibilities as a ruler. And Violant, far from acting like the responsible Queen "Constança," only encouraged these excesses. As in the case of Robert of Naples, God's disapproval of French fashion brought political disorder to the kingdom, and like Robert, Joan would die without a male heir to succeed him.

A Courtly Shift toward Eiximenis: Martí I and Maria de Luna

Only a few months after the *jurats*' reprimand, Joan would be dead as the result of a hunting accident, in circumstances that were not entirely unsuspicious. Martí I, the heir, was out of the kingdom, fighting to assert his son's right as king of Sicily, and Maria de Luna was left to assume control of the realm, and defend the Crown against the intrigues and attacks of the pretenders to her husband's throne. Martí would not arrive in his realms until sixteen months had passed. Maria, a woman of forty, and a seasoned seigneur, who had inherited her father's extensive estates as a child, and also managed the lordships she and her husband had been granted as *infants* of the realm, was an experienced and capable politician.[101] In view of the circumstances, the parable of Robert of Naples and Constança would have been very much on the new queen's mind when she came to the throne in 1396, and Eiximenis lost no time in reminding to her of it. Maria, therefore, quickly determined that to survive politically, she would need to become a "Constança" rather than a "Violant," and decided, therefore, to distance herself in every sense from her predecessor. She would follow the advice Eiximenis gave her, and that he would lay out formally in his work, the *Scala Dei*. Moreover, she realized that Eiximenis's opinion reflected a wider consensus in this respect.

It was about that time that the Dominican Antoni Canals dedicated his translation of Hugh of Saint Victor's *De arra anima* (On the Earnest Money of the Soul) to Maria. This was presented innocently as a book of religious meditation, but it was undoubtedly intended to serve as a more morally appropriate alternative to the racy French-style literature that was circulating at court. During Violant's reign, spicy titles like *The Treatise on Venus* (*Tractat de Venus*), which Riquer suggests is a Catalan translation of some French love poem along the lines of the *Roman de la rose*, were popular.[102] For moralists

101. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 24–27.
102. M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:457.

like Eiximenis and Canals, and for the nativist upper nobility, the accession to the throne of a queen who was one of their own presented an opportunity to restore both Aragonese culture and a model of virtue to the Crown, and thereby reestablish political stability.[103] Antoni Canals did not hesitate to specify to Maria de Luna in the clearest of terms what he considered to be proper reading for ladies of the court: "One ought to read approved books, and not vain works, like the fables of Lancelot and of Tristan, nor the *Romance of the Fox,* nor provocative or covetous books, like that, including books on love, books on the art of love, Ovid's *On the Old Maid*."[104]

Further, he urged the queen to dictate to her peers and her ladies-in-waiting which books they should read so that these would become fashionable. For him, the queen's reading should be a model for noblewomen's reading just as the queen herself was a model for noblewomen in general, and all in the service of understanding and better loving the Lord, Jesus: "And I beseech, high lady, your mercy that this treatise [*De arra anima*] may be conveyed especially to your ladies-in-waiting, so that in this manner, just as Your Highness serves them as an example of honorable living, likewise, this treatise so recommended by Your Highness, may provide them with education in our doctrine, by which through chaste works the singular love of Jesus Christ is" greatly inflamed.[105]

If anything, Canals's activism betrays just how far the Catalan court had strayed from the moral ideals of the clergy, and how thoroughly by 1396, French works such as the romances of Lancelot and Tristan had been appropriated by Catalans and had come to form the literature of entertainment among the elite in the Crown of Aragon.[106]

As it was, Eiximenis, Canals, and other members of the clerical-literary circle—such as the Franciscan Joan Eximeno, who would go on to become Maria de Luna's confessor, and who would author *La contemplació de la Santa Quarentena* (*The Contemplation on Holy Lent*) for Martí I—would be pleased by the new king and his queen, and the changes they brought to the tone of the court.[107] At any rate, it was not only the scandalously provocative French fashions, and the literary culture of the court that would have discomfited

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103. Canals, *De arra ànima,* 125. See also M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:457; and Bratsch-Prince, "La fuerza del prólogo."

104. Canals, *De arra ànima,* 125.

105. Canals, *De arra ànima,* 125. See also Nigris, "I prologhi."

106. Bofarull y Mascaró, *Documentos literarios*, 420; M. de Riquer, *Obras de Bernat Metge.*

107. In fact, after Eiximenis wrote his *Scala Dei* for Maria de Luna and around the same time Joan Eximeno wrote his *Contemplation* for the king, Canals not only dedicated his *De arra ànima* to the queen, but also wrote his own *Scala de contemplació* (*Ladder of Contemplation*) for Martí I (c. 1398–1400) to teach him how to elevate his soul to God. This is to say, rival clergy were vying for

the pious party at court; Joan I, like his father, Pere, had been much more inclined to patronize astrologers, along with preachers.[108] Hence, in a short anonymous chronicle written c. 1416–38, the king would be characterized in contrast to his brother as Martí "the Ecclesiastic": "And with King Joan having died, his brother, King Martí the Ecclesiastic, succeeded him in all of the kingdoms and counties. And he was given this name because each day he endeavored to hear three masses and habitually prayed the hours like a priest, and he took great care of the ornaments of churches, and especially those of his own chapel."[109] It was only later that he would come to be known as Martí "the Human" or "Humane,"—not because of any humanist sympathies, but merely because he had the reputation of being a well-intentioned, good-hearted person.

The king, however, was no pious bumpkin. Martí had a rather large personal library—an inventory of his books made shortly after his death in 1410 listed 289 titles, not including the books of his chapel. He enjoyed reading the classics, as he showed when he referenced them in his discourse to the *corts* at Perpignan in 1406, and his collection included forty-four works written in French, including collections of poetry and song. Still, his tastes were clearly more serious that Joan's—only 5 percent of his library consisted of "pleasure reading" (*literatura de entretenimiento*).[110] As Albert Hauf has pointed out, he and Maria had a strong and genuine preference for devotional books, and read quite complex works on theology.[111] Nor was this lost on the secularly inclined literati among Joan and Violant's courtiers, who occasionally expressed an open disdain for Martí. In 1395, for example, when news came to the papal court of Avignon of the death of Pero Maça, a well-known Valencian knight who had accompanied Martí on his mission to Sicily, Bernat Metge, who was serving as Joan's envoy to Papa Luna (styled as Benedict XIII), remarked openly, "It would have been better had the Duke [Martí] died, rather than Pero Maça, and if the lord-King [Joan I] would do what he ought, he would cut off the head of the Duke."[112] Such comments would scarcely serve to endear the prehumanists of the court to Maria and Martí when they came to the throne a year later.

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influence with the new rulers by producing edificatory tracts that reflected their own particular visions of piety and propriety. See M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:458.

108. Roca, *Johan I,* 363–415; Ryan, *A Kingdom of Stargazers,* 105–23.

109. *Crònica del regnat de Martí I,* 19. These ideas were later incorporated by Carbonell into his *Chroniques d'Espanya;* see Carbonell, *Chroniques de Espanya,* f. 207r.

110. Massó i Torrents, "Inventari dels bens mobles." See also Cingolani "*Nos en leyr,*" 115.

111. Hauf, *D'Eiximenis a Sor Isabel,* 37–38.

112. M. de Riquer, *Història,* 2:404.

This change of regime came at a moment of intense crisis: not only were the monarchy and the kingdom on the verge of insolvency, and the new king far off in Sicily, but two pretenders—the unborn child and heir that Violant claimed to bear, and Joana de Foix, Joan's daughter by his first marriage—challenged Martí's succession, and troops of mercenaries had been massing in France to attack Catalonia, with Joan's own courtiers thought to be behind the plot.[113] All of this served to discredit everything that Joan and Violant had stood for, including their cultural/literary program. Maria de Luna, because of both these circumstances and her own tastes and temperament, would initiate a political and cultural reorientation of the Crown. Almost immediately after taking power, Maria cast Violant and Joan's key advisers into jail, including Bernat Metge. The protohumanists' fortunes would fall, and those of pious moralists like Eiximenis, Canals, Eximeno, and Pere Marí (see chapter 3) would rise. Hence, Metge's attempt to rehabilitate and ingratiate himself with the new rulers through his composition of *Lo somni,* a work that at once lauded Martí and served to excuse himself.[114] And while Metge did indeed obtain a pardon and was eventually restored to a position in the king's chancery, he would write no more original literature and undertake no more translations—his only literary output would be the letters customarily composed by secretaries in the royal service.[115] With Joan dead and Violant a dowager, without the prestige or means to act as a literary patron, the budding humanism of the Crown of Aragon withered on the vine—it would not reappear in bloom until the mid-fifteenth century and the reigns of Alfons the Magnanimous (1416–42) and María de Castilla.

Such shifts in courtly culture were not infrequent consequences of the demise of a ruler. A similar turn took place at the Castilian court with the death of Alfonso the Learned (1252–84). This poet, polymath, and aspiring Holy Roman Emperor had sponsored an ambitious project of translation and literary creation that involved Arabic, Hebrew, and Romance languages and spanned Islamic, Jewish, and peninsular Christian traditions. In Alfonso's court an ideal courtier had to be capable of "dialoguing across these various cultures and groups, and the ideal king was the wise man informed by Muslim, Jewish and Christian advisors."[116] Alfonso's son and successor, Sancho IV (1284–95), and his heirs, Fernando IV (1295–1312) and Alfonso XI (1312–50), did not altogether abandon the project of translating Arabic and

113. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 39–40.

114. M. de Riquer, *Obras de Bernat Metge,* 185.

115. Rico has suggested that Metge's last work was his *Apologia.* Riquer instead dates the *Apologia* to 1395. See Rico, *Primera cuarentena,* 83–84.

116. Hamilton, *Representing Others,* 115.

Hebrew texts that had been so important during the reign of Alfonso X, and their courts remained religiously diverse, but "they consciously tried to break with Alfonso's secular courtly ideal," while looking for legitimacy and counsel in the church and clergy, and envisioning the kingdom in explicit terms as a pious Christian land.[117] Fernando Gómez Redondo has called this reorientation in Castile "molinismo," because he identifies Maria de Molina, Sancho IV's queen, as the force behind it.[118] A century later in the Crown of Aragon, it would be another queen, Maria de Luna, who with the support of her husband, Martí I, moved the court away from a cosmopolitan and secular model toward one that favored the literary stylings and moral posturings of Christian authorities. Out went the incipient humanism, skepticism, and the love and entertainment literature characteristic of the courtiers and functionaries during the reign of Joan and Violant, and in came the wisdom and conduct literature, and theological and moral treatises of the clerical-literary elite.

Eiximenis's Last Years

During the reign of Martí and Maria, Eiximenis remained very active, not only as a writer, but also as a political figure. He was actively involved in governing the city of Valencia, served on Maria's advisory council during her lieutenancy from 1402 to 1406, wrote books, including the *Scala Dei* (for Maria), the *Vida de Jesucrist,* and the *Llibre del àngels* (for her exchequer, Pere d'Artés), and lobbied the queen to promote the Observant movement among the Franciscans. This last project was perhaps his most successful and significant, resulting in the foundation of the Observant convent of Sancti Spiritus in Gilet (in Valencia) in 1402—the first officially reformed convent in Iberia. The mission of the Observant Franciscan movement, which began to coalesce around the mid-fourteenth century, was to reform the decadent order from inside, and to return to the ideals of its founder, Francis of Assisi (c. 1181–1226). They advocated the literal adherence to the Franciscan Rule of 1223, as had continued from Francis's day until the reform of Pope John XXII (1316–34) in 1322. In that year, the bull "Ad conditorem canonum" had allowed Franciscans to own property and obliged them to maintain poverty only as individuals.[119] This helped accelerate the decadence of this

117. Ibid., 115–16.

118. In the Castilian case we see how at the court of Sancho IV the defense of Christianity became a dominant literary theme. See Hamilton, *Representing Others,* 116; Gómez Redondo, *Historia de la prosa,* 1:861–62.

119. Yates, "The Theory of Ultramontane Observant Poverty," 57–59.

powerful and increasingly worldly order—a process of corruption that was already well under way.

In order to take on the reformation of such a wealthy and influential organization Eiximenis needed powerful patrons to protect him and to support the establishment of new, reformed convents. He knew that Martí I and Maria were excellent prospects; they had contemplative tendencies, and they were more concerned than most members of the aristocracy not only with their own salvation, but with charity and the service of God. Moreover, Eiximenis became the leading religious figure in Valencia, the city that would become Maria's center of power—not only did she serve as lieutenant here, but many of her most valuable and important seigneuries were in the kingdom. Eiximenis was not the only famous religious figure here, but he was very popular, widely respected, and a constant presence in the city. Although the native Dominican Antoni Canals would serve as Inquisitor here from 1401, he had spent most of his career away at court. Only Vicent Ferrer, the legendary, miracle-working Dominican, preacher to commoners and kings, was more popular than Eiximenis. But Ferrer also operated in a political orbit beyond that of the city, ministering across Christendom, and only returning to his city in times of exceptional crisis. Ferrer, like Eiximenis was a theologian and writer, but his life was more itinerant. And while Ferrer was called on to help solve the great crises of church and state—the Great Schism, and the "compromise of Caspe"—Eiximenis toiled with the *jurats* in the more mundane world of urban politics.[120] In the end, Eiximenis did not leave Valencia until the last year of his life, when in 1408, at around age sixty-eight, he was appointed as interim bishop of Elne in Roussillon (in France today, but in his time part of Catalonia). It was there he died, sometime before 25 April 1409.[121]

As a literary figure Eiximenis far outlived his contemporaries, whether theologians like Ferrer and Canals, or courtly humanists like Metge—indeed, any and all of his contemporaries in late medieval and Renaissance Iberia. As we will see in the succeeding chapters, it was his books—written with obvious authorial intentionality, within a very particular context, with the aim of disseminating theology and promoting a particular brand of popular devotion and personal morality—that were translated, adapted, copied, printed, and reprinted all over Iberia and beyond in the succeeding centuries. He was one of the few fourteenth-century authors who made the transition from the scriptorium to the printer's shop. Many others did not—their works were

120. See chapter 2.

121. Riera i Sans and Torrent, *Diplomatari,* 68–70.

never printed and, as a consequence, suffered oblivion, if only for the simple fact that they were unavailable to readers. Works like Metge's *Lo somni* and the archpriest of Hita Juan Ruiz's *Libro de Buen Amor* (*Book of Good Love;* c. 1330) may be considered masterpieces of medieval Catalan and Castilian literature today, but in their time, they circulated among and were known by far fewer readers.[122] As Keith Whinnom put it—in his effort to problematize modern readings of medieval Iberian literature—our use of modern criteria to study medieval and early modern texts, instead of focusing on what contemporaries read and apparently preferred, constitutes a "form of distortion" in the way we approach the literary past.[123]

It was Eiximenis, rather than Metge or Ruiz, that late medieval and early modern readers, patrons, and publishers clearly preferred. Hence, the first book of his *Lo Crestià* was printed in Valencia as early as 1483 (by Lambert Palmart), to be followed by the *Dotzè,* a year later. The *Llibre del àngels* was printed in Catalan in Barcelona (by Juan Rosenbach) in 1494, and even earlier in Castilian (in 1490, in Burgos, by Fadrique de Basilea). The *Llibre de les dones* came out in Barcelona (again, with Juan Rosenbach) in 1495, the same year as Eiximenis's *Pastorale.* His *Scala Dei* was also published in Barcelona (by Diego de Gumiel) in 1494, before the *Llibre de les dones.* The same year, his *Vida de Jesucrist* was published in Castilian in Granada by no less a figure than the archbishop and royal confessor Hernando de Talavera. Eiximenis's literary success was mirrored by his successes as a Franciscan reformer. The Observant movement he supported thrived in the centuries after his death, and the spread of its patronage from royal court to royal court coincides to a large extent with the dissemination of his literary and moralistic treatises—it too was bound up with the ideas of personal piety and devotion, and of feminine virtue and morality that he so tirelessly promoted and that resonated so strongly among both contemporaries and future generations of readers, and particularly among the women of the upper aristocracy.

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122. These works became canonical not because of their status in the Middle Ages, but because they jibed with the aspirations and ideals of the nineteenth century. See Pereira-Zazo, *De cómo el Libro.*

123. Whinom, "Spanish Literary Historiography," 97–98.

Chapter 2

Noble Inspiration

Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós and the Book of Women *(Valencia, c. 1380–96)*

> A man must always show great discretion towards his wife so that she judges him to be a noble man and a man of truth and great superiority, and he should not be mean or deceitful towards her, nor reveal any noteworthy vice; for if he does, she shall despise him with a vengeance, and shall never serve him willingly; and if she sees the contrary of that vice in another man, she shall love that man with all her heart.
>
> Francesc Eiximenis, *El dotzè* (*Dotzè del Crestià*, 539, ed. Renedo and Guixeras, *Francesc Eiximenis*, 94)

For Francesc Eiximenis, women were not passive creatures, incapable of action or agency without the guidance of a male figure; indeed, it was their potential for independent social, cultural, and political will that made guiding women's devotion and morality an imperative. Nowhere is this view more evident than in his long-enduring *Llibre de les dones,* and in his regard for the noblewoman who inspired him to write it. The book's dedication to Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, was no empty conceit, no formulaic acknowledgment of the graces of a patron—Sanxa was truly behind the book. The friar explicitly acknowledged that he was composing it in response to her request for "a devout treatise for her [spiritual] health and for the direction of her life."[1] In the *captatio benevolentiae* formula that followed, Eiximenis admitted that although he may have been writing regarding the specific circumstances of this lady, the recommendations he was about to give would have held no less authority had they come from the lips of the Lord himself: "Since, most high lady, wishing to satisfy your desire, to offer to you the present book, which although your dignity may not require it,

1. *LD,* I:7.

nonetheless, I have done so, as my ignorance allows, since, lady, it may please you to excuse me for the failings that you find here, whereas all that is good that you may encounter and reflect on here, originates with the fountain of all Good, Jesus Christ, from whom all proceeds."[2] The immediate question is, who was this Sanxa Ximenis, and what had she done? And why would Eiximenis compose a treatise on feminine morality and place her name on it?

It was quite typical for medieval authors to dedicate their works to important individuals in the hopes of influencing their opinions, finding favor, or acquiring them as patrons. A wealthy benefactor could plug an author into a wide network of readers and supporters who would not only bolster his popularity and influence, but would provide him both with protection and with the prospect of future commissions. As a writer, Eiximenis was no exception. Moreover, women were clearly recognized as driving the creation and promotion of vernacular literature, reinforcing its interrelation with lay piety.[3] Women owned, read, exchanged, bought, and inherited books, and even commissioned them, including both original works and translations. The books they owned related to various subjects, but devotional texts seem to have been especially popular. This can be seen in the abundance of Books of Hours produced for noblewomen, which were often customized with special prayers, included particular saintly vitae, and were decorated with lavish and expensive illuminations and miniatures—although, to be sure, it is usually difficult to gauge how much of an active role women took in shaping these projects, particularly the minor ones. In any case, women's patronage was important not only at the point of production, but in terms of distribution. Women were far more likely than men to move as a consequence of marriage; and for noblewomen, this meant not merely going to their husband's home, but to a foreign city, region, or kingdom. As a consequence they became potent vectors for literary/cultural dissemination and cross-pollination, bringing and establishing their customs, mores, and affinities in their new surroundings, as in the case of Violant de Bar. Women of the upper aristocracy, like Violant, were all the more important in this dynamic because they were raised to be educated, cultured creatures, and because they had the greatest range of matrimonial movement, and wielded tremendous influence in their adopted homelands. These women had long been trained to read and

2. *LD,* I:7.

3. For the cultural patronage of medieval women, see Bell, "Medieval Women Book Owners," 742–43; McCash, *The Cultural Patronage,* 13–15; Jordan, *Women, Power, and Religious Patronage,* 18–20; and Martin, "Exceptions and Assumptions."

write in the vernacular, and from the fifteenth century, with the growing vogue of the *studia humanitatis,* more and more of them were learning Latin.

This was apparently not the case with Lady Sanxa, however; Eiximenis almost certainly composed the *Llibre de les dones* for her in Catalan, precisely because her Latin (and the Latin of the aristocratic and bourgeois women who would be the book's wider audience) would not be good enough to understand the book had it been written in that language. And it was crucial that she be able to read it—this book was no mere object, but a work Eiximenis intended for her education and daily use, written with the tone of authority a Franciscan friar would use when addressing a female believer who had strayed. It was a work intended as a guide for moral and spiritual discipline. In his own words, the book is "all about women, and discusses their virtues, and vices, and the remedies for the latter," and his recommendations are grounded in what "Holy Scripture and the holy Doctors and philosophers have spoken, according to whose experience we are taught, and a brief treatise regarding what the aforesaid said on these matters."[4] But, both because brevity was not one of Eiximenis's virtues as a writer, and because Sanxa certainly had ample familiarity with what at the time would have been regarded as vices, the author evidently felt that clear and detailed instruction was required, and the result was a rather weighty volume, which neither condemns women as morally irretrievable nor defends them against misogynistic abuse.

Of the 565 pages that make up the modern print edition of the *Llibre de les dones,* 27 are devoted to (female) children and young women, 78 to wives, 15 to widows, and 429 to nuns, devotion, and religiosity in general. This lengthy final section includes commentaries on the Ten Commandments, essays on the seven deadly sins, the sacrament of confession, penitence, and a treatise on women and contemplation.[5] This distribution reflects (among other things) how prominently chastity and religious devotion figured in Eiximenis's thought, and how clearly he wanted to imbue Sanxa with these qualities. Evidently, the book was meant to be read at home, as it was too large to be carried around. The manuscript copies, such as the one Sanxa must have read and used, tended to run over 360 folios in length, while the

4. *LD,* I:7–8.

5. Eiximenis, *Libre de les dones,* ed. Naccarato. Naccarato's edition is based on only one of the manuscripts that has preserved the text (Ms. 534 National Library of France at Chantilly), although he adds in his notes some comparative material from Ms. 79 of the library of the University of Barcelona and from the incunabula published by Joan Rosenbach. See *LD,* I:16–17; and Clausell, "La tradició textual," 201.

incunabula typically contain 267 folios (534 pages).[6] Seven manuscripts with the original text in Catalan have survived, along with a very early printed edition published by Joan Rosenbach (Barcelona, 1495).[7] There are also seven extant manuscripts of the first Castilian translation, which bears the title *Libro de las donas* (*Book of Women*).[8] The second Castilian version, *Carro de las donas* (*Chariot of Women*), printed in Valladolid in 1542, is of similar length. But in Eiximenis's estimation this represented a distillation of a tremendous amount of wisdom and learning, and in the dedication he apologizes to Sanxa for its brevity. It is so short, he says, because he wants "to avoid discomfiting those who read it, since as the poet says, a shorter read is more pleasing and more effective, since it disturbs less in reading it."[9]

That Eiximenis would dedicate the book to Sanxa is certainly significant. Women of the upper aristocracy unquestionably made appealing patronesses, but Eiximenis was rather selective about whom he dedicated his compositions to, and there was certainly no shortage of noblewomen who would have been delighted to receive such an offering. Moreover, it was rare for the friar to dedicate his books to women at all; in fact, aside from the *Llibre de les dones,* the only other composition written for a patroness was the *Scala Dei,* dedicated to no less a figure than Maria de Luna, Queen of the Aragon, Valencia, and Mallorca, Countess of Barcelona, and seigneur of many other territories. Eiximenis would have written this book for Sanxa because he felt that she needed it and would benefit from his guidance. This leads to a series of questions: Who was Sanxa? Why did she need Eiximenis's counsel? What type of instruction did he give her, and what did it mean? And, finally, how did this relationship shape the book at this early stage, and what were the consequences in influencing the book?

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6. For example, the manuscript BHUB: *LD,* Ms. 79 (Barcelona, 1434) has 363 folios, whereas the printed version BC: *LD,* Inc. 11-VII-5 (Barcelona, 1495) has 267 folios.

7. The manuscripts in Catalan are the following: Ms. 534 (National Library of France at Chantilly), Ms. 79 (Universidad de Barcelona), Ms. 57 and Ms. 1797 (National Library, Madrid), Ms. 1984 (National Library, Madrid), Ms. 461 (Library of Catalonia, BC), and Ms. 260 (Sant Cugat, Jesuit Library of Sarrià). See Massó i Torrents, "Les obres de Fr. Francesc Eiximenis," 588–692; and Puig i Oliver et al., "Catàleg dels manuscrits," 16–107.

8. The manuscripts in Spanish translation titled *Libro de las donas* are the following: Ms. 12731, Ms. 6228, and Ms. 10156 (National Library, Madrid); Ms. 386 (Library University of Salamanca); Ms. h-iii-14 and Ms. h-iii-20 (Library Monastery of El Escorial); and Ms. 118-Z-10 (Library of the Noviciado, Madrid). See Massó i Torrents, "Les obres de Fr. Francesc Eiximenis"; and Puig i Oliver, "Catàleg dels manuscrits," 491–536. Clausell points out that one of the Spanish editions is very close to Ms. 534, which is the basis of Naccarato's modern edition; Clausell, "La tradició textual," 203.

9. *LD,* I:8.

Sanxa's Marital Troubles: Contexts and Subtexts of the *Llibre de les dones*

Sanxa was the daughter of Gonçal Ximenis d'Arenós and Timbor de Bellpuig—a lineage of families with Aragonese and Catalan roots that had the Kingdom of Valencia as their power base, and that had strong ties with the royal house. Sanxa's father had fought for King Pere the Ceremonious on a number of occasions, including the campaigns of Mallorca and Sardinia and against the rebellious Unions in Valencia, while her maternal grandfather had been a royal counselor of Pere's father, Alfons the Benign (1327–36).[10] This had endowed Sanxa with considerable prestige and a substantial landed dowry, and facilitated her own marriage to Joan d'Aragó, Count of Prades and Baron of Entença, a grandson of Jaume II and first cousin to Pere the Ceremonious. Joan's father, the influential *infant* Pere d'Aragó (1305–81), Count of Prades, served as the chief counselor to Alfons the Benign, and later to his son and heir, Pere, when the latter came to the throne at age twenty-six. Indeed, Pere de Prades even composed a "mirror of princes" in Latin, which he presented to the young king Pere, to help him face the challenges of rule.[11] But on 12 November 1358, after the death of his wife, he decided to abandon the world and take up the brown robe of a Franciscan—a turn that catapulted him to instant respect among the members of the order, including Eiximenis. In fact, Eiximenis and Pere knew each other; we know they coincided at the papal court in Avignon, where Pere had journeyed to declaim to Urban V (1362–70) his revelations regarding the need for the papacy to return to Rome.[12] It was after Pere took up his vocation that his son, Joan, inherited the County of Prades and the Barony of Entença and the Seneschalship of Catalonia from his father. Soon after, probably in 1360 or 1361, Joan married Sanxa, and they soon had four children: Pere, Jaume, Lluís, and Timbor, all of whom were favored and protected by the monarchs of Aragon, whom they served loyally and to great reward.[13] However, things

10. For example, Pere the Ceremonious knighted her father, as the king recalls in his *Chronicle,* and his presence is documented in several military campaigns at the side of the monarchs. Pere III, *Crònica,* book 3, chap. 28. In the 1340s rebellious nobles and municipalities in Valencia and Aragon (the Unions) rose up against the king; eventually he defeated them at the battle of Épila in 1348.

11. Beauchamp, "De l'action à l'écriture," 237; and Pere d'Aragó, *De vita, moribus et regimine principum,* ed. Beauchamp.

12. Pou i Martí, *Visionarios,* 527.

13. For instance, Jaume de Prades became constable of Catalonia and admiral of Sicily. Zurita points out that Joan I asked Jaume to accompany his daughter Violant when she traveled to meet her husband, Louis of Anjou. Zurita, *Anales,* X:430.

would change dramatically when, after twenty-one years of marriage, Sanxa decided to abandon her husband and three of her children never to return.[14]

We do not and cannot know the causes or motivations behind Sanxa and Pere's separation; in their case, as in virtually all marital crises, there were undoubtedly many interrelated factors. It is difficult, if not impossible, for historians to disentangle the history of the bedroom, wherein so much is left unsaid, let alone unwritten. We can be sure, however, that the separation was not amicable. Eva Izquierdo Molinas has suggested that Sanxa left her husband because he continually committed adultery. As Lluís Martí put it, Count Pere "gave no thought to the days and hours the said Lady was away from him, the better that he could have his way with [other] women."[15] In any case, adultery alone was hardly a sufficient excuse for a woman to leave her husband in the Middle Ages. Adultery, public mistresses, and illegitimate children were common and accepted features of society, particularly among the nobility, and even royalty. "Natural," or illegitimate, children carried no stigma; at times they were legitimized, and at others, incorporated as lesser members of the core lineage. Royal and noble bastards were given land, positions, and wealth by their fathers—indeed, the ranks of the upper clergy were a common destination for them. Maria de Luna and Martí I, for example, held their illegitimate grandchildren in great affection; in his dying days, Martí moved to have the boy Fadrique legitimized and made heir to the County of Luna and the Kingdom of Sicily.[16]

Of course, there was a clear double-standard in operation as regarded men and women and the practice of adultery, even though theologians and members of the clergy consistently presented male and female infidelity as equally sinful. Eiximenis was no exception, and in his *Llibre de les dones,* he discusses the subject of adultery in some detail, within the section devoted to married women. For example, he rejected the validity of honor killings; in his view, adultery could never serve as an excuse to murder one's wife, and each spouse had the right to separate. In such a case, each would be condemned to a life of solitude, unable to seek a new partner: "And if you ask if a woman may separate from her husband because of adultery, this is so, if the man has indeed committed it, and I say, likewise, that a man may leave his wife, if the wife has done the same to the man."[17] At bottom, Eiximenis's approach

14. Zurita, *Anales,* XI:48.

15. Izquierdo, "Un testimoni," 143. Lluís Martí was the administrator of Cheste, a hamlet west of Valencia that was part of Sanxa's patrimony. We know many details about Sanxa's life thanks to the testimony he gave in court. See below.

16. See López Rodríguez, "Últimas voluntades."

17. *LD,* I:100.

was pragmatic—it would not be any good to have unbridled young women coursing about, so he recommended wives leave an adulterous husband only if the woman in question was sufficiently aged as to be able to control her own sexual desire, if she did not have children to care for, and if she had the economic means to support herself. This was certainly Sanxa's situation when she separated from her husband in 1385. In fact, the root of Joan de Prades's abiding anger and hostility seems to have been the fact that the independent Sanxa had the benefit of so many rents and incomes.

And if Sanxa conformed to Eiximenis's criteria for the separable woman, she also had his sympathy—along with that of the Clare convent of Valencia, the councillors of Valencia, and the royal family. Count Joan de Prades was widely regarded as an unpopular troublemaker. He was an inveterate and underhanded schemer, who had gained the distrust and dislike, in turn, of Pere the Ceremonious and his last queen, Sibil·la de Fortià; Joan I and his wife, Violant de Bar; and finally, Martí I and Maria de Luna. For example, he infuriated Pere and Sibil·la when he refused to permit the marriage of his daughter, Timbor, to the queen's brother, Bernat.[18] Years later, he gained Joan and Violant's enmity by conspiring with his brother, Alfons de Villena, to have the queen's favorite, Carroça de Vilaragut, drummed out of the royal household on sensational and trumped-up charges of sexual impropriety in 1388—the slander went so far as to identify King Joan as one of Carroça's lovers.[19] Later, in 1392, he was behind a plot to eliminate another trusted counselor of the royal family, the respected knight Francesc d'Aranda. Pere accused Aranda of having poisoned the heir of the throne, Joan's only surviving son, Ferran, after the three-year-old prince took ill and died.[20]

The count's motive was clear: he wanted to occupy the position of chief counselor to the king—the same position his father, the *infant* Pere d'Aragó, had filled for Pere the Ceremonious, and he would eliminate anyone he saw as competition. In the end, he failed; Aranda, who took the vows of a Carthusian, went on to become one of the most-respected and longest-serving statesmen in the realm. He was one of the committee members at Caspe, and acted as counselor to every monarch, until his death in 1438. This intrigue did Joan de Prades no favors with Martí I—the count had intimated that Aranda's motive in poisoning the heir had been so that Martí could usurp

18. Silleras-Fernandez, "Money Isn't Everything," 80–111; Roca, "La Reyna empordanesa," 14; and Boscolo, *La Reina Sibil·la,* 17.

19. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 36–40; Danvilla, "Biografía de la ilustre Na Carroça," 402–451; Sanpere i Miquel, *Las costumbres catalanas,* 190–206.

20. Ferrer i Mallol, "Un aragonés consejero"; Esteban, "Biografía del venerable D. Francisco."

the throne. Hence, Maria gave her full support to Sanxa, providing her with a *guidaticum* (letter of transit), and forcing Joan to provide for the upkeep of his widowed daughter-in-law, Joana, and her four daughters.[21] As an added insult, when Maria de Luna was directing the defense of the realm against the incursions of the pretenders, Joana and Mateu of Foix, in 1396–97, she passed Joan de Prades over, and appointed his brother, Alfons de Villena, and his enemy, Count Pere II of Urgell, as her chief military commanders.[22]

This was an era in which divorce was not recognized, in which annulments were both expensive and largely the reserve of men, and in which separation was considered beyond the pale, so Sanxa's departure from the marital castle in Prades was evidently thoroughly considered and carefully planned. The alibi for her departure was to attend her eldest son's wedding, which was set to take place in the city of Segorb, in the Kingdom of Valencia, where her own family's power base was located. That of her husband was in Catalonia.[23] In 1385, at the time she left Joan, Sanxa probably was around forty years old, given that she had probably married around 1360, and in this era noblewomen married in their early adolescence (although Eiximenis recommended that women wait until they were eighteen years old to do so). Hence, at the time of her separation, she was a mature woman who had passed her reproductive years, and who had already provided her husband with three sons and a daughter. Sanxa's eldest son, Pere, was marrying Joana de Cabrera, the daughter of an illustrious Catalan family, who was living in Segorb at the noble court of her kinswoman Maria, Countess of Luna, and her husband, the *infant,* Martí—the future queen and king of the Crown of Aragon.[24] Thus, at this time a whole series of people who would prove to be influential in Eiximenis's life and career were living in and around the city of Valencia: Maria de Luna, for whom he would write the *Scala Dei;* her husband, the *infant,* Martí, to whom he would write a series of private letters of advice—a sort of loose *speculum principum;* Sanxa, her son, and her daughter-in law; and, of course, Francesc Eiximenis himself. He had moved to Valencia around 1382, three years before Sanxa's return, and from that time he had been very active not only in the Franciscan community, but also

21. Silleras-Fernandez, "Dues reines per un rei."

22. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 50–52.

23. Izquierdo, "Un testimoni," 140–41. This marital alliance between the Prades and the Cabreras was doubled because Sanxa and her husband married her son Pere to Joana de Cabrera and also married their daughter Timbor to Bernat de Cabrera (Joana's brother) in 1382.

24. ACA: ARP, MR, reg. 919 (sin numerar), f. 36v (Liria, 1 September 1385) and f. 44r–v (Segorb, 1 December 1385).

in the government of the city—acting as an adviser to the municipality, for which he composed his political treatise, *Regiment de la cosa pública*.

Now a free woman, Sanxa established herself in her dotal lands, settling in her main castle, at Torres Torres (very close to Maria de Luna's city, Segorb). There she lived for ten or eleven years, with her oldest son, Pere, and his wife, Joana de Prades (née de Cabrera).[25] But Sanxa's life would be subject to another dramatic change, when in 1395 her son, Pere, died. He did not have a male heir, only four daughters, and therefore, the title of Count of Prades and the great fortune that went with it were now to be passed to his younger brother, Jaume de Prades. Ultimately, it would be Pere's daughter, Joana, who would inherit the County of Prades in 1414, but this could hardly be foreseen at the time.

Thus, for the moment without a male protector, Sanxa was vulnerable. Moreover, she could not count on her own surviving son, Jaume, for protection—as the second-born, he had been forced to seek his fortune elsewhere, and since 1392 he had been in Sicily with the *infant* Martí, and the *infant*'s son Martí the Young, king of Sicily, carving himself out a place among the nobility of the island.[26] Therefore, from 1395 on, lacking the "masculine protection" of a larger family and the financial and social support necessary to legitimize her estrangement, Sanxa was cast back on the mercy of her choleric husband. It seems that during the years that she lived with her son her estranged husband, Joan de Prades, had been demanding that she return, and that she hand over to him a portion of the rents she received on her properties in Valencia. The fact that she was able to resist her husband's demands until 1395 shows the degree to which her son Pere was protecting her. Nor would she probably have been able to continue to defy her powerful husband's will had she not been enjoying protection and support from the royal family. Jerónimo Zurita, the great sixteenth-century Aragonese chronicler, noted that Joan de Prades enjoyed the favor of neither Queen Violant nor the powerful Counts of Urgell and Cardona, whereas Sanxa was fully supported by her own family.[27] The separation would not only have been known in noble circles, but would undoubtedly have been a source of scandal and no small humiliation for Joan.

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25. The seventeenth-century chronicler of Aragón, Jerónimo Zurita, recalls in his *Anales* that Sanxa and her husband separated after twenty-one years of marriage, during the reign of Martí I. I agree with Izquierdo in situating this separation earlier on, during the reign of Joan I, around 1385. Izquierdo, "Un testimoni," 137.

26. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 80–81; and Corrao, *Governare un regno,* 67–132.

27. Zurita, *Anales,* XI (chap. 48).

After her son's death, Sanxa's first concern was to safeguard her property and money, knowing that she needed them to preserve the independence and comfort that she was entitled to by her birth and position. Locking down her assets and incomes, from that point on she did not share more than a minimal amount of her seigneurial rents with either her widowed daughter-in-law, Joana, or her four granddaughters: Margarida, Joana, Elionor, and Timbor. As was customary in such cases, it was her estranged husband, the Count of Prades, who bore the responsibility to support and protect his granddaughters. Thus, Sanxa and Joana traveled from Torres Torres to the city of Valencia to deal with the inheritance, the dowry, and the other legal matters relating to Pere's estate. In Valencia, a substantial city with a functioning political and civil infrastructure, Sanxa also probably hoped to be safer from any possible attack from her husband. And it was here, in the city's Franciscan convent, that Eiximenis lived.

We know some of the details of Sanxa's life, her separation, and subsequent troubles thanks in part to the testimony of Lluís Martí, the *alcaide* (administrator) of Cheste, a hamlet west of Valencia that formed part of the patrimony Sanxa had inherited from her father. Martí was examined in the context of a suit involving property claims of the convent of Saint Clare in the city of Valencia. The court case dates from 1416 and deals with a conflict between Jaume Gil, prebend and vicar of the Church of Sant Joan del Mercat (which formed part of the Clarissan convent), and the agent (*síndic*) of the convent, regarding some properties that Joana de Prades, Sanxa's daughter-in-law, had left to both institutions in her last will and testament.[28] Even though the process does not relate to Sanxa directly—who, according to a witness, Pere Roca, died on 25 June 1416—and even though it does not mention Eiximenis by name, the testimony that was recorded provides us with important details of Sanxa's life that allow us to better understand both the *Llibre de les dones* and the author's mind-set when he composed it.[29]

Lluís Martí, the *alcaide,* was a key witness in the inquest. He and his wife had long been in the service of the countess in positions of confidence and intimacy—his wife had been nursemaid to Sanxa's granddaughters. Lluís gave a long explanation of the problems and challenges that the countess had been forced to endure after her separation (a separation, incidentally, that

28. The court record has been partly edited by Izquierdo, "Un testimoni," 147–56; the document is conserved at the ARV: Governació, Litium, Reg. 2218, ma 44, f. 150v.

29. Pere Roca, a citizen of Valencia, declared that the countess died on 25 June 1416: "As is notoriously true and manifest, the said egregious countess a few days ago passed from this present life to the other; that is on the day after the Feast of St. John, just passed, which was the twenty-fifth of the month of June." ARV: Governació, Litium, Reg. 2215, ff. 493v–494r (Valencia, 3 June 1416).

Zurita referred to as a "divorce" in his *Anales*). Lluís recounted how Sanxa and Joana went to the city of Valencia to try to resolve their issues with the inheritance. They stayed first at the house of a close relative, Eximèn Perez d'Arenós, but only until they were able to find their own accommodation. The house they rented was situated not far from the baths; they resided there for over a year.[30] Once the dispute regarding the estate had been resolved, they returned to Torres Torres for a short while, but within a year Sanxa went back to the city of Valencia, and Joana left for Catalonia with her daughters. At this point many significant changes had taken place in the Crown of Aragon.

On 19 May 1396 Joan I died in a hunting accident, and his brother, Martí, was recognized as successor. However, Martí was in Sicily embroiled in a war in support of his son's claim to the throne there. In the meanwhile, Maria de Luna, who was in Barcelona at that time, had been acclaimed queen and lieutenant of the Crown of Aragon.[31] Maria de Luna and Joana de Prades were related, and they were personally close: before her marriage Joana had been a lady-in-waiting in Maria's comital court. As a consequence, the queen intervened immediately to set right Joana's financial problems.[32] First, Maria wrote to Joan, Count of Prades, Sanxa's husband, and ordered him in no uncertain terms to treat Joana, her dear cousin who had lived with her during her maiden years, fairly, as she deserved, and to grant her a generous pension.[33] The queen also interceded with her uncle Alfons de Ribagorça, Marquess of Villena, the powerful magnate and *infant,* and the older brother of Joan de Prades—the same man who had destroyed the reputation and standing of Violant de Bar's favorite, Carroça de Vilaragut—asking him to refrain from taking any legal action against Joana, and to treat her fairly.[34] Finally, Maria drew Joana close, taking her and her two elder daughters, Margarida and Joana, into her court to serve her as ladies-in-waiting, while the youngest one, Timbor, became a nun in the monastery of Valldonzella.[35] This Cistercian foundation, on the outskirts of Barcelona, was a favorite of the royal family; in the fourteenth century it became customary for the royal household to board there on their way in and out of the capital city. With this, everyone in the family was under protection except for Sanxa herself; in

30. Izquierdo, "Un testimoni," 141.

31. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 37–64.

32. Ibid., 146–49.

33. ACA: CR, Reg. 2329, f. 23r (Barcelona, 13 October 1396).

34. ACA: CR, Reg. 2110, f. 22v (Barcelona, 10 July 1396).

35. Timbor professed as a nun in Valldonzella (near Barcelona), where her aunt, Constanza, was abbess. See Forns de Rivera, "El monasterio," 923–25.

order to remedy this and to safeguard her own reputation, she moved into the protective walls of the Clarissan convent in the city of Valencia.

In the Middle Ages monasteries fulfilled a whole series of functions for women, in addition to the most obvious one of providing a space for devotion, prayer, and contemplation. Their role as depositories for noble and wealthier bourgeois women is well known—for families who suffered an excess of daughters, and who could not provide dowries abundant enough for them to marry at or above their station, monasteries provided an economic and honorable solution. Not only would a monastery accept a more modest endowment in exchange for accepting a daughter, but having a daughter as a nun enhanced the family's reputation, and gave them direct access to the church (if not God). On the other hand, feminine monasteries were also used to confine problematic women. The venerable Aragonese Hospitaller monastery, Santa María de Sijena, for example, became the destination of a series of unmarried, illegitimate, and infirm noblewomen and *infantas,* including Blanca, the daughter of Jaume II, who was sent there at age fifteen because of a congenital illness. Such monasteries were also used to contain dangerous and disruptive women; hence, Juana la Beltraneja (1462–1530), the dispossessed heiress, who would lose the throne of Castile to Isabel the Catholic, was incarcerated as a Poor Clare, in Coimbra.

Feminine monasteries were often powerful political and economic concerns—peopled by royalty and members of the upper aristocracy, and endowed with substantial estates; being a nun could provide a woman with an independent career, and expand her family's political network. For this reason queens and other wealthy women often endowed or founded monasteries, both to expand their influence as patronesses and, at times, to provide themselves with a retirement situation in which they would be in a position of power. Santa María de Sijena, for example, was founded in 1187 or 1188 by Sancha de Castilla, the queen of Alfons the Troubadour (1157–96), and it was there that she retired as a dowager.[36]

Monasteries protected women in two distinct, but complementary ways: they protected them from the influence and violence of outsiders (including the men of their own family), and they preserved women's reputations, transforming them in the eyes of their peers into pious women who were willing to abandon the world.[37] The convent was an "enclosed garden," rich in symbolic meaning, associated with chastity, purity, and the Virgin Mary—

36. See Arco y Garay, "El monasterio." Indeed, Sanxa's granddaughter, the dowager-queen, Margarida, would herself retire as abbess of the monastery of Valldonzella (see below).

37. See Greene, *Medieval Monasteries;* and Hamburger, *Crown and Veil.*

as the Song of the Songs evokes: "A garden enclosed is my sister, my spouse; a garden enclosed, a fountain sealed up."[38] In other words, a monastery was a place where Sanxa and her Clarissan sisters could live and experience Eiximenis's teachings in full; it is hardly a surprise that the overwhelming bulk of the *Llibre de les dones* is dedicated to nuns and the life of pious contemplation. By the same token, it was also a place where women could find a space of their own to write; this can be seen in the Hispanic tradition in figures such as Teresa de Cartagena, Isabel de Villena, Teresa de Ávila, and Sor Juana.

Sanxa chose the convent of Saint Elizabeth of Hungary (Santa Elisabet) in Valencia as her refuge because of her family's long-standing connections with that particular Clarissan convent, and because as patroness of the institution she thought she would be able to impose her will and make her opinions heard and respected.[39] The Poor Clares had arrived in Valencia as early as 1239, but lacked any permanent quarters, so in 1249 Sanxa's forebear, Ximen Pérez d'Arenós, lieutenant general of the newly conquered kingdom, provided them with a set of buildings just outside the city walls, on the condition that they not move the convent.[40] From that point it functioned as the Arenós pantheon; Sanxa's own parents were interred there, and in view of her disputes with her husband, it was going to be her resting place as well—if she could not bear him in life, she was scarcely going to spend eternity at his side, surrounded by the Prades ancestors. The Clares had started off as a severely rigorous order, cloistered, observing vows of (near-total) silence and strict poverty, and engaging in fasts and other mortifications, but by the late 1300s, they had become considerably more lax.

According to Lluís Martí's testimony it was there, probably shortly after she moved in, that Sanxa had the opportunity to speak with and make confession to none other than our writer, Francesc Eiximenis. Unfortunately, it is impossible to know what they discussed. They most likely already knew each other, having been living so close to each other for so many years—Eiximenis was a public figure, and Sanxa had ties to the local Franciscans. In any case, their meeting must have been a disappointment for Sanxa; the friar was unequivocal: she could not remain in the convent unless she was willing to take the vows of a nun (in which case she would need to annul

38. The images of the Song of Songs (Song of Solomon 4:12), where Solomon praises his bride, were understood in the Middle Ages as an allegory referring to the union of Christ and the church.

39. The convent had been named after the famous mystic and tertiary Saint Elizabeth of Hungary (1204–31), who was related by marriage to the Barcelona dynasty (see chapter 3). After 1402, a bull of Clement VII (1523–34) renamed it La Puridad, or Puríssima Concepció, in reference to an image of the Virgin that was venerated there. Ivars, "Año de fundación."

40. Burns, *Crusader Kingdom,* 231.

her marriage), or barring this, obtain a papal dispensation.[41] Eiximenis was a devout Franciscan, who railed at length in his writings against the aristocratic custom of using monasteries as safe havens, second residences, or hostels. His position was clear: the presence of wealthy laypeople disturbed and corrupted the peace and prayer of monasteries, and the problem was even more acute in the case of the feminine institutions. This is a discourse that runs through his major works, including *El dotzè*.[42]

Eiximenis, Sanxa, and Thirty Years of Discord

Although we have no firm date for the composition of the *Llibre de les dones,* most of the literary scholars who have studied it (including Ivars, Martí, Massó i Torrents, Riquer, and others) agree that it must have been written before Eiximinis wrote the *Scala Dei*—a work that incorporates excerpts from the *Llibre.* In view of this, Izquierdo is undoubtedly correct in suggesting the book was written while Sanxa was in the midst of her struggle with her husband, and not long after the death of her son. This would date it to 1395–96, and probably 1395.[43] The book must have been finished before Eiximenis wrote the *Scala Dei,* which, if Andrés Ivars is correct, was composed for Maria de Luna in 1397 as gift on the occasion of her recognition as queen in May of the previous year.[44] Eiximenis was a fast writer, but he is unlikely to have completed the *Llibre de les dones* in less than eighteen months.

The year 1395 was precisely the moment that Sanxa arrived at the convent, and in the course of their interview Eiximenis pressed the countess to enter the convent and take up a life of devotion. Hence, the book's heavy emphasis on nuns—Eiximenis's intention was at once to inculcate in Sanxa the beauty of devotion and contemplation, and to provide a mode of feminine piety to the Clarissan community at Valencia. As an added bonus, the book could serve as a general guide to feminine devotion, and even for Christian men who desired a closer relationship with God. The book's primary purpose, however, was to provide guidance to Sanxa. The countess was going to be required to leave the convent if she did not take the vow

41. "And with the New Year having passed, lady Joana left Catalonia, and the said lady-countess went to Valencia and stayed in the said convent of the Clares. And being there, she was informed by master Francesc Eiximenis and others, who said that by order of the Pope, no one could stay within the cloister of any women's monastery on pain of excommunication." Izquierdo, "Un testimoni," 151.

42. Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 2:399–403.

43. Izquierdo proposes 1398 as the date, but I agree with Ivars's suggestion of 1395–96. Ivars, "Franciscanismo," 261 and 268.

44. See chapter 3.

of a tertiary. Hence, in providing her with this encouragement, Eiximenis was indirectly legitimizing her position as a runaway wife. But Sanxa was evidently not vocationally inclined, and preferred to make a play for papal dispensation. This would take time, however, and in the meantime, she was required to depart from the safety of the community. Forced out, she took refuge with a city councillor, Jaume Romeu—who would also have known Eiximenis, being one of the councillors to whom Eiximenis dedicated his political treatise, *Regiment de la cosa pública*. The hoped-for dispensation seems to have been granted in late 1396 or early 1397, as Maria de Luna was consolidating her position as monarch and regent. This was probably no coincidence; the schismatic Avignonese pope, who was acknowledged in the Crown of Aragon, was Benedict XIII, or "Papa Luna"—Pedro Martínez de Luna, Maria's kinsman. Maria was related to Sanxa by marriage, and was an active supporter of the countess's children. Not surprisingly, the new queen also protected Sanxa—granting her, for example, a safe conduct in 1397 so she could travel throughout the realm without fear of arrest.[45]

At least, we must presume that papal release was granted, given that Sanxa returned to Santa Elisabet without having taken up the habit of a Clarissan nun. But even though she had taken refuge in the convent, Sanxa's husband endeavored doggedly to take her back, and the couple's separation would spark a controversy that would extend for more than thirty years. In his testimony, Lluís Martí referred to many letters full of threats that the count wrote to his wife in his own hand (but which, unfortunately, have not survived). Finally, Joan determined to go personally to Valencia and force her back to the marital home. Lluís recounted how the Count of Prades arrived by boat in Grau, the port of Valencia, but was intercepted by King Martí—who happened to be residing in the royal palace of that city at that moment—who stopped him and requested that he return to Catalonia.[46] Such was the support that Sanxa enjoyed from the royal couple, that her right to live as a layperson among the Clarissan nuns was not challenged, nor was her right to enjoy her rents and incomes, or to disobey and defy her legitimate husband. This was no small matter, as the masculine honor of the landed nobility was not to be trifled with, and a man's incapacity to control his woman reflected badly not only on his manliness, but on the virtue and virility of his legitimacy. A decade earlier, massive civil war among the nobility in the Crown had only been narrowly avoided after Maria's own sister, Brianda de Luna, had abandoned her husband, Lope Ximenéz de Urrea, to live with her lover,

45. ACA: CR, Reg. 2331, ff. 123r–v and 124r.
46. Izquierdo, "Un testimoni," 152.

Lluís Cornell.[47] In the Middle Ages, aristocratic marriage was not a private affair, but a political one.

According to Lluís Martí, Sanxa was truly afraid of Joan. But this is not to say she would be cowed by him. She also took her protection into her own hands, for example, by posting trusted spies on the border at Tortosa and La Galea, the closest land and sea frontiers between Catalonia and Valencia. She had two of her own men, Pere Gomiç, the *alcaide* of Cheste, and Francesc Pelegrí, posted outside the convent gate; both knew the count personally and would be able to recognize him if he arrived in search of his wife.[48] Nevertheless, news of Joan's approach struck fear into Sanxa. On one of the occasions when she received word that he was moving toward Valencia, the countess panicked and abandoned her own apartments in the convent. Taking along her granddaughter Joana (who was living with her at the time), she hid out in the cell of Jacmeta Fustera, one of the nuns. Sanxa was evidently hoping that Joan would not dare to violate the sacred, feminine precinct in which she had barricaded herself: she was not only within a convent, but also within a cell within a convent, and in the cell with one of the nuns.[49] As it was, Sanxa and Joana did not dare leave the protection of the nun's chambers until they had news that Joan de Prades had left the city.

According to Lluís, Count Joan frightened Sanxa more than the plague itself; or so it can be judged from the countess's refusal to leave the ill air of the urban convent for the safety of her castle at Torres Torres, when an epidemic struck the city in 1409 or 1410. When she finally did abandon the city, it was for less secure but less obvious refuges, including Gandia, Parcent, the Vall d'Alfandech, and Morvedre. By this point Maria de Luna—one of Sanxa's key patronesses and supporters—had died, but Sanxa's status was greater than ever. In 1409 the widowed king, Martí, had taken as his second wife none other than Margarida de Prades, the daughter of Sanxa's son Pere—a girl of renowned beauty, whom Maria de Luna had taken into her court as a lady-in-waiting, and who previously would have grown up at Torres Torres with her mother and father, and her grandmother, Sanxa. And although both came to naught, in this period, Sanxa nearly married one granddaughter, Joana, to the brother of the powerful Count of Urgell, and

47. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,*" 67–72.

48. Izquierdo, "Un testimoni," 153.

49. "As was said to the said lady-countess, that the said lord [Joan de Prades] had come to Valencia . . . the said lady-countess, who did not feel secure where she had been staying within the cloister of the said convent, she entered the said convent with lady Joana, her niece, and lodged and ate within the cell of a nun . . . Sister Jacmeta Fustera." Izquierdo, "Un testimoni," 153–54.

succeeded in betrothing another, Violant, to Fadrique de Luna, Martí I's only surviving (if illegitimate) male descendant.[50]

On the other hand, Sanxa's bitter relationship with her husband endured, and all the longer, given their extraordinary longevity for the time. Sanxa lived into her late seventies, and Joan into his early eighties; they even survived Eiximenis, who died in 1409, aged seventy. In fact, they outlived the dynasty of the House of Barcelona. Martí I died in 1410 without leaving a legitimate heir, and his son Martí the Young had died in 1409, leaving only the bastard Fadrique. By this time Martí I was old and failing, and could not produce more children. Thus, his death in 1410 ushered in a two-year interregnum—a stalemate among the various pretenders to the throne that was eventually broken, thanks to the negotiated settlement known as the Compromise of Caspe. On 28 June 1412, nine arbitrators (including Vicent Ferrer) proclaimed Fernando (Ferran) de Antequera, a member of the Trastámara dynasty of Castile, as the new king of the Crown of Aragon (1412–16). In fact, Joan de Prades had presented himself as a candidate for the throne at Caspe, but once it had become clear he would not be chosen, he threw in his lot with Ferran d'Antequera and against Jaume, Count of Urgell. In 1411, as the two sides began to spar, and Ferran needed to move against Urgell, Joan demanded of Ferran that he help take possession of Sanxa's lands by force of arms, as he declared was his right. The matter was turned over, however, to the Catalan parliament, which after some equivocation, resolved to defend Sanxa's position—Sanxa and Joan's domestic dispute had become a matter of state. However the *corts* felt about the countess's behavior, the bottom line was that they did not want to see Castilian troops in Catalan territory, or so Galceran de Rosanes explained to a disappointed Count Joan on behalf of the Catalan parliament.[51]

Finally—again, according to the rich and detailed testimony of Lluís Martí—Joan de Prades breathed his last on 12 September 1414, and as soon as Sanxa heard the news she prepared to abandon the convent and return to her beloved castle of Torres Torres. But it was not to be. By this point she must have been about seventy-four years old herself, and she was ill. Her physicians, Pere Soler and Lluís d'Ordins, and her granddaughter, Joana (who was the new Countess of Prades, by virtue of Joan's death), were afraid that she would die if she were to undertake the short but demanding

50. Vendrell Gallostra, *Jaume el Dissortat;* and Silleras-Fernandez, "Widowhood and Deception," 196–203.

51. Izquierdo, "Un testimoni," 424; and Bofarull y Mascaró, CODOIN, II:423–27.

forty-kilometer journey that separated Torres Torres from Valencia.[52] And so, Sanxa, the dowager countess, died at the convent of Saint Clare of Valencia on 25 June 1416—the same place where she had been forced to spend the last twenty years of her life. Undoubtedly she had much time to read and reflect on the book that Eiximenis wrote for her, and it must have been of great use to the nuns among whom she lived. And although she never affirmed it, the *Llibre de les dones* must have provided her with some comfort, given that she lived a cloistered life not all that different, on the surface, from the sisters around her—although whether it was the image of a beloved God or that of her hated husband that she meditated on for those two decades is something that not even Lluís Martí's evocative testimony can reveal.

Gender and Agency: Sanxa's Life in Context

The narrative of Sanxa's life, as explained and evoked by Lluís Martí in his testimony, reads in part like a potboiler, and in part like a terrifying memoir of fear and abuse. It is fascinating on several levels—not the least for the tremendous insight it gives us into the circumstances of the writing of the *Llibre de les dones.* In principle, we do not have any reason to believe that Lluís was lying or embellishing his testimony to any great degree, and, in any case, there are independent sources that confirm elements of his narrative and document the key moments in Sanxa's life. There is no doubt that Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós was the woman behind the *Llibre de les dones,* that she fled her husband, Joan de Prades, and that this separation started a bitter conflict between them that lasted some thirty years.[53]

Beyond this, Sanxa's life story exemplifies both the possibilities and the limitations that noblewomen were subject to in the late medieval Crown of Aragon. On the one hand, Sanxa's aristocratic pedigree and family ties, her son's protection and the royal family's support, and the economic resources she had at her disposal helped her to escape a husband whom it is clear she was unprepared to live with, and whom she greatly feared. On the other hand, her biography reflects the constraints that women lived under—even wealthy and powerful women. Sanxa felt safe only under the protection of her son, and when he was gone, the only other option was to take refuge in

52. Izquierdo, "Un testimoni," 154. Joana de Prades married Joan Ramon, Count of Cardona. Sanxa's failed ambition to return to Torres Torres was described by witnesses in ARV: Governació, Litium, Reg. 2218 (year 1416), ma 44, f. 150v.

53. The most disappointing part of his testimony for the historian is that he declared that Sanxa was living with her son, her daughter-in-law, and her granddaughter, Joana, not mentioning the other three granddaughters that she had by her son and not mentioning anything about their whereabouts.

the church. There, within the confines of a feminine religious community, she could keep out of the reach of her husband, and of the medieval construct of womanhood that was broadly established in her society, and was reinforced and elaborated by Eiximenis and other male authors. As Foucault put it, discourse is created and perpetuated by those who control communication—in this case, educated clergymen and other members of the masculine intellectual and cultural elite who determined what was normative for women.[54] Truth, morality, and meaning are created through discourse that "can be both an instrument and an effect of power."[55] But the reception of that discourse is another matter, and it is worthy of note that Sanxa did not necessarily see the convent as a viable or preferable permanent venue—she did not take the vows of a nun, and she yearned to return to her castle at Torres Torres.

Sanxa Ximenis's life and circumstances, and her obvious and genuine agency vis-à-vis her husband, transformed her into a sort of "anti-Griselda." The story of Griselda was a very popular and widely circulated tale in the Europe of the late Middle Ages and the early modern period. Originally composed in Italian by Boccaccio as the final narrative of the *Decameron* (1353), it was immediately translated into Latin by Petrarch, and, thereafter, disseminated broadly in successive translations and adaptations. For instance, it appears as part of the *Castigos y doctrinas que un sabio daba a sus hijas* (*Punishments and Morals That a Wiseman Gave to His Daughters),* a mid-fifteenth-century Castilian moralizing text, and was popularized in French by Philippe de Mézières and Christine de Pizan, among others, and in Middle English by Chaucer, in "The Clerk's Tale."[56] It appeared in Catalan as *Valter e Griselda* (c. 1388) thanks to none other than Bernat Metge—Joan I and Violant de Bar's secretary. The tale recounts the story of Griselda, a paragon of spousal obedience and patience—a Job-like figure to the Jehovah of her husband. After marrying Gualtieri, Marques of Saluzzo, she suffers continuous and cruel tests in his efforts to establish her absolute obedience and devotion to him. For example, Gualtieri tells her that he has killed their firstborn child, a daughter, and subsequently tells her the same regarding the son she bore him next. The fact that this is a ruse, and that Gualtieri has merely hidden the children, is immaterial—what is important is that in her submissiveness Griselda puts her husband even before the lives of her children. As

54. Foucault, "Why Study Power?" 212–13.

55. Foucault, *The History of Sexuality,* 100–101.

56. Krueguer, "Introduction," xxii. See an analysis of three of the versions in Campbell, "Sexual Poetics."

the culmination of his cruel experiment, Gualtieri informs her that he is going to annul their marriage in order to marry a higher-status bride than the lowborn Griselda. When the bride, a twelve-year-old girl, arrives at the palace, and Griselda is forced to wait on her, the spurned wife's only reaction is to wish the couple well in their upcoming marriage. It is at this point that Gualtieri reveals that all was merely a test, and that the young bride-to-be is, in fact, the daughter he had hidden away more than a decade earlier. Both children are restored to Griselda, and Gualtieri is now content in the knowledge that his wife will obey his every whim and desire without protest or resistance. Griselda, apparently, was the type of obedient woman that Joan de Prades must have dreamt of having as a wife; but she was a fantasy, a literary archetype, an inimitable wife-figure. Sanxa, on the other hand, was a flesh-and-blood woman, and one who would not yield passively to abuses, or put obedience to her husband above all. Sanxa was willful and disobedient, and she had the support of her children and the establishment.

In fact, Sanxa's experiences were not at all unique or exceptional in the Iberia, the Crown of Aragon, or the Valencia of her time. It was not at all uncommon for noblewomen to take control over their own lives in defiance of their husbands, using their wealth, resources, and family connections in order to establish themselves as independent or to pursue their own agendas. Hence, as noted above, Brianda de Luna, Maria de Luna's sister, abandoned her legitimate husband, Lope Ximénez de Urrea, in 1377 to elope with her lover, Luis Cornell.[57] Adding insult to injury, Brianda accused Lope Ximénez of impotence, thus triggering a feud between the Urreas and Cornells that threatened the stability of the realm. Taking refuge with her powerful and wealthy sister, and depending on Maria's intimate connections with the ruling monarch and the heir, Brianda married her paramour in defiance of king and church, and eventually succeeded in having the union recognized. When Luis Cornell's sister, Isabel, was left a widow on the death of her husband, Pero Maça, she seized control of her deceased spouse's estate and kept it out of their son's hands. Settling in the city of Valencia, she lived as a widow and refused to marry, despite her youth and famous beauty. In 1382 she was accused of engaging in illicit sexual adventures, with two men at once—one of whom, Pero (or Pere) Jordan d'Urries, was her own neighbor, whom she had allegedly seduced by flirting with him from her windowsill.[58] While

57. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 67–72; Sarasa, "Mitos y ritos feudales," 127–32; and Salvador Sanpere, *Las damas d'Aragó,* 89–105.

58. The partial transcript of her trial (26 April 1382) has been preserved, but has not yet been edited. ACA: CR, procesos en folio, 114/b. For an analysis with extensive excerpts, see Silleras-Fernandez, "Between Expectation and Desire."

this might seem to underscore the warnings of moralists like Eiximenis, that women should not pass their time staring out their windows, it was most likely that the accusations were a setup engineered by Isabel's own son, who was determined to take control of his own estate. However, even once he had dislodged his mother, the younger Pero Maça's problems with independent women continued. He found himself suing his own wife, Brianda Cornell (Brianda de Luna's daughter), after she refused to give any of her money to him. She claimed he was a spendthrift who kept bad company, and she was not about to see her children's patrimony frittered away.[59]

Queens, not surprisingly, were even more strong-willed. In 1387 Leonor of Trastámara, the wife of King Carlos III of Navarre (1387–1425), abandoned her husband and settled for seven long years in the court of her brother, Juan I of Castile (1379–90).[60] In an even more sensational case, Margarida de Prades, Sanxa's own granddaughter, was determined to keep her status as dowager queen of the Crown of Aragon, and her independence after the death of her husband, Martí I. So when she fell in love with her chamberlain, Joan Vilaragut, she married him in secret. They even had a child, whom she gave up so as not to reveal her status. Finally, when her husband died in 1422 she took the vows of a Cistercian and joined the royal abbey of Valldonzella as abbess.[61] Other contemporary dowager queen mothers, such as Catalina de Lancaster in Castile and Isabeau de Bavarie in France, were notorious for refusing to relinquish their role as regent when their own sons came of age.

It is clear, and Eiximenis and other moralists were well aware, that women—or at least the wealthy aristocratic women who leave a documentary record—knew how to manipulate expectations regarding gender and navigate the shifting waters of sexual politics, but not without considerable effort, and often, not without resorting to deception. Needless to say, these are not the type of women that Eiximenis held up as models of female virtue to be imitated by others, yet, these were precisely the type of women who were most likely to be exposed to his teachings, to have read his books, and even to have owned their own personal copies. Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, Brianda de Luna, Isabel Cornell, Brianda Cornell, and Margarita de Prades certainly did not have a "Griselda complex"—they were the confident and self-possessed members of a narrow and interrelated female elite, who knew each other, and often supported each other, in their efforts to control their

59. ARV: Governació, Reg. 2218 (year 1416), ma 48, f. 300r.

60. Narbona Cárceles, *La corte de Carlos III,* 394.

61. Vendrell Gallostra, "Margarida de Prades," 19–23; Zaforteta Musoles, "Segundas nupcias y viudez"; Silleras-Fernandez, "Widowhood and Deception," 196–203; and Silleras-Fernandez, "Dues reines."

own destinies, frequently in defiance of the husbands, sons, and fathers who claimed the right to control them.[62]

The First *Llibre de les dones:* Fundamental Concepts

So, what type of book did Eiximenis write for a woman like Sanxa, whose atypical trajectory was matched only by her resourcefulness and determination? What message did the friar seek to convey to her, and why? What strategy did he pursue? And how did all this correspond to his vision of womanhood? Eiximenis—Sanxa's "humble servant in Jesus Christ"—declared that he had composed this ponderous tome "all about women"; but, as a subsequent adapter of the book into Castilian observed in the mid-sixteenth century, most of the book actually talks about men. Hence, the anonymous adapter went so far as to explain, "This devout book is called 'The Chariot of Ladies'; it deals with the life and death of Christian men."[63] This is not all that remarkable in itself; there is considerable evidence that men owned and probably read didactic literature ostensibly intended for women, apparently to be able to better understand and educate them. As the present study will show, this was certainly the case with the *Llibre de les dones* and its later adaptions and iterations.

Moreover, the way that a book was received and used by readers does not necessarily reflect the intentions of its author, particularly those many editions, whether manuscripts or in print, that included what Gérard Genette has called "paratext"—annotations, rubrics, subtitles, illustrations, and other editorial embellishments that conditioned readers' interpretations. Consequently, a book written for women could be presented or could function as a book for men. In any event, the second part of the *Llibre de les dones* discusses Christian doctrine in a manner that is at bottom equally relevant to male and female readers, and this is precisely how it was used in later periods.[64] This application springs from the universality of Eiximenis's objectives in writing it, and from his intense spirituality. He was a pioneer of the Observant Franciscans, a movement that strove to return to the fundament ideals of purity and devotion of the order's founder, Saint Francis of Assisi—an orientation that is clearly manifested in his approach to devotion in this text.

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62. This expression is borrowed from Klapisch-Zuber, "The Griselda Complex."

63. *CD,* I:127. The translator wrote: "This scholar entitled this book 'of Women,' but most of the book is directed towards men." Massó i Torrents, "Les obres," 642; also cited by Naccarato: see Eiximenis, *LD,* I:xviii.

64. Genette, *Palimpsestes,* 10–11.

Despite its title, this was not a textbook or handbook for the education of women, but was meant to guide them through their daily lives, whether in the household or convent. It is a book about "virtues and vices, and how to the remedy the latter," based on material drawn from the Bible, the fathers and doctors of the church, classical philosophers, Eiximenis's own experience, and common sense.[65] Eiximenis's goal was to teach Sanxa, and all women, how to rule themselves, how to control their passions, and understand their own nature, while pushing them toward devotion. And while the book may have been dedicated to Sanxa, its audience was wide: not only the noblewomen and maidens of the court, but also the new urban merchant class that Eiximenis was so fond of and close to.[66] To make his argument and ideas fully understood he used many examples and anecdotes that made the text more interesting, less theoretical, more practical, and, therefore—following the ideals of the period—more appropriate for a female readership. The prose he employed was light and easy to understand, and peppered with examples and anecdotes—medieval didactic style at its purest. In the late Middle Ages there were many books like Eiximenis's; as Alcuin Blamires observed, both the misogynous texts and defenses of women that circulated at this time demonstrate that a keen need was felt to understand women's nature and their relationship with men.[67]

Eiximenis spent some time studying at Oxford, and he evidently picked up some of the local language there, given his rather peculiar etymological attribution of the English word *woman*. He writes this phonetically as *uman* ("oo-man"), and cites its origin as "a husband's pain" (*dolor de marit*), which he obviously construed from "woe to man."[68] Further, his definition of woman, referring to the Adamic rib and borrowed from Alanus of Lille's commentary on Boethius, is succinct: "a wounded man (*hom occasionat*) . . . made by a wound of him, he came first, and is the more complete (*perfet*) example of the species than her."[69] This is not at all original, but can be traced through Aquinas and Albertus Magnus back to the Aristotelian tradition of woman as imperfect male: *mas occasionatus.* Eiximenis elaborates this idea by focusing on Genesis, speculating that "had Adam nor Eve ever sinned, woman would still be lesser than man, and would recognize him as superior

65. *LD,* I:6.

66. Aurell and Puigarnau's study of merchants shows that Eiximenis was read by fifteenth-century Barcelona merchants. See Aurell and Puigarnau, *La cultura del mercader,* 216–18. See also, Sabaté and Soriano, "D'inèdits i retrobats," 447–61; and Alturo, "Noves dades," 255–63.

67. Blamires, *The Case of Women,* 19–50.

68. *LD,* I:19.

69. *LD,* I:12–13.

without shame."[70] But after the Fall, the fate of women was sealed: "Your desire will be for your husband, and he will rule over you."[71] Humanity was cast out of the garden of Eden, and women were punished—they lost most of their intelligence, they were to suffer the pain of childbirth, and the impurity of menstruation, and were to be subjugated to their husbands.[72] Nevertheless, Eiximenis acknowledges that Eve alone cannot be held responsible for the Fall; after all, Adam listened to her, and did not stop her.[73] And if woman's mutability is more intrinsic, and man's is more deliberate, while she sins out of ignorance, he is aware of his transgressions even as he commits them.[74]

Following the book of Genesis, Eiximenis underscored women's role as partners of men: "It is not good for the man to be alone. I will make a helper suitable for him."[75] Like Aristotle, he considered men political animals, equipped with speech to communicate the moral ideals, such as justice, that he saw as keys to virtue and stability in both household and city-state. As Eiximenis put it, "Man is by nature an animal that requires company, and company is a necessity for him."[76] Women's functions, on the other hand, are to procreate, to take care of children, and to provide a means to show how a husband's love for his wife parallels that of Christ for his church—a motif that also echoes allegory in the Song of Songs. Hence, Eiximenis warns, if a woman gains power over her husband, she will always be contrary. After all, Adam was deceived by his wife, not by the serpent.[77]

In Eiximenis's view, women's natural debilities may be counterbalanced by education in the Divine Law, and fortified by exemplary models, and the lessons of the fathers of the church, including Augustine, Gregory the Great, Ambrose, Jerome, and of pagan authorities, such as Aristotle, Horace, Virgil, and Ovid. This, however, is no easy task given Eiximenis's characterization of women as unstable, unable to keep a secret, and full of poison, like the serpent. They are plagued by fear, and because of their limited intelligence, they

70. *LD,* I:13.
71. Genesis 3:16.
72. *LD,* I:16, 21.
73. *LD,* I:24.
74. *LD,* I:134, 138.
75. Genesis 2:18.
76. *LD,* I:114.
77. This motif of the disobedient and contrary wife is common in the Middle Ages and can be found in other didactic texts and folktales. For instance, in *El Conde Lucanor* (1335), Don Juan Manuel includes some tales of contrary wives who either died as a result of their insubordination or learned their lesson and reformed. See, for example, Don Juan Manuel, *El Conde Lucanor,* ed. Sotelo, *Exemplos* XXVII (188–201) and XXXV (224–30). A similar approach can be seen in Martínez de Toledo's *Arcipreste de Talavera o Corbacho* (1438), 109.

can barely control their passions and sexual desire.[78] They are chatterboxes, deprived of God's blessing in retribution for the incident in the garden. They are avaricious and vain, using cosmetics to make themselves appear more beautiful than they really are. This vanity feeds into their deceptive nature, Eiximenis proffers, before paraphrasing Ecclesiastes: "All malice falls short of the malice of a woman."[79]

Although these ideas were hardly novel, and were part of the established intellectual approach to gender in the Middle Ages, because the *Llibre de les dones* was written for and would be presented to Sanxa and would be read by a female audience, it was politic for Eiximenis to temper his position. And so he advocated for women's literacy as a means of overcoming their feeble nature—following the lead of authors such as Vincent de Beauvais, but anticipating Joan Luis Vives and his *De institutione feminae Christianae* (*On the Education of a Christian Woman,* 1524) by over a century.[80] For example, Eiximenis praises the good qualities given to women by God, including their sense of *vergonya*—a combination of shame and modesty. This *vergonya* served to help women remain chaste and pure, but it was not enough—in addition, they needed to acquire more virtue, and this depended on understanding their place and role in society.[81]

But Eiximenis goes further, and in the chapter titled "How God has in some senses endowed women well, and how none should speak ill of them," he defends women—a chapter read by Robert Archer as "the earliest example of a 'defense' of women in a Hispanic language."[82] To follow Archer's argument, misogynists are those who construct a discourse on women in

78. *LD,* I:21.

79. This is his interpretation of Ecclesiastes 7:26: "And I find something more bitter than death: the woman whose heart is snares and nets, and whose hands are fetters. He who pleases God escapes her, but the sinner is taken by her." Some of these ideas, common in the period, are more fully developed in other writings by Eiximenis on the subject of women, including stereotypes regarding women's predisposition to fear and panic. Eiximenis, *Dotzè,* II-1:165. He revisits female malice in the *Terç,* and in the second part of the *Llibre de les dones.* See Eiximenis, *Terç del Crestià,* I:267; cf. *LD,* II:136–37.

80. In both the *Llibre de les dones* and in *Lo Crestià* Eiximenis opines that women should learn how to read. *LD,* I:91; *Lo Crestià,* II:196. See Viera and Piqué, *La dona,* 41.

81. "God gave Woman much more shame in the face than Man." *LD,* I:10. In this sense his ideas contrast with Don Juan Manuel's in *El Conde Lucanor.* In his tale L, "Concerning that which happened to Saladin and a Lady, wife of a Knight in his service," the latter claims that the best quality that a man can posses is "shame." In the *Jardín de nobles doncellas* Martín de Córdoba also points out that women have more *vergüenza* than men. For him, this "shame" is one of their good qualities. M. de Córdoba, *Jardín de nobles doncellas,* 8.

82. *LD,* I:23. In *the Terç,* chapter 950, he denounces those writers who had vilified women, including Solomon, Aristotle, Cerverí de Girona, and the Capellà de Folquera. See Archer, *The Problem of Woman,* 26; and Viera and Piqué, *La dona,* 86.

purely negative terms in order to discredit them as a gender. Eiximenis does not qualify, because he attributes to women a place in God's creation, both before and after the Fall, and acknowledges their good characteristics and accomplishments. After all, how could one impugn the female martyrs and saints, or for that matter, truly virtuous women? And, indeed, Eiximenis avoids discussing women's vices and weaknesses as essential or universal, as most misogynistic authors do. For him, all women are not equal: some can aspire to virtue, and the *Llibre de les dones* is meant as a guide in that process.

On the other hand, David Viera and Jordi Piqué probably go too far in defending Eiximenis on this count. In their pioneering study on Eiximenis and womanhood published in 1987, they present him as a sort of protofeminist, and labor to excuse his misogynistic rampages as "characteristic of his time."[83] Viera and Piqué have also compared Eiximenis's views on women in the *Terç,* which includes a treatise on lust, to his views in the *Llibre de les dones.* They feel that he was harder on women in the *Terç* because the goal of that work was the absolute avoidance of sin, whereas the *Llibre de les dones* had the double goal of avoiding sin and attaining salvation, and was explicitly aimed at a female readership.[84] However, as Curt Wittlin has pointed out, one cannot fully grasp Eiximenis's views without reading a number of his works, for the simple reason that he is not always consistent.[85] At the root of these apparent contradictions is often a question of audience—Eiximenis would tailor his positions to suit his patron and audience. Hence, in a book like the *Llibre de les dones*—written for a noblewoman and to be read by noblewomen, he would present a less harsh depiction of female character, and choose his examples and illustrations with some care.[86] He reserves his most sensational and pejorative anecdotes about women—for example, that they were given a monstrous tongue, made from the tail of a goat, or created only after Adam had insisted—for works such as his *Terç del Crestià:*

> Woman continually bites her tongue while talking, if she finds you've let her loose. That's why some poets say that Our Lord created woman without a tongue, and that Adam was sad because she couldn't talk to him, and begged the Lord to give her a tongue. And they say that the Lord said, "Adam, let it be, although if she has one, she'll speak ill at

83. Viera and Pique, *La dona,* 45–100.

84. Viera, "Francesc Eiximenis on Women," 195.

85. Wittlin, introduction to Eiximenis, *Libre de les Dones,* ed. Naccarato, xviii.

86. Hames investigates an analogous ambiguity in the case of Ramon Llull, who is variously described by scholars as an anti-Semite or a Judeophile. The question, concludes Hames, was not whether he "was" one or the other, but that he expressed different opinions in different contexts and for different audiences. Hames, *The Art of Conversion.*

> every opportunity." And, nevertheless, Adam did not cease to beg Our Lord that he create her a tongue, and they say that the Lord saw a goat passing, and took his tail and made it into a tongue for the woman. And without delay, she spoke to the snake, and so, Adam was led to sin by her speech.[87]

The *Llibre de les dones* is not entirely free of misogynistic rants, but there are certainly fewer than in the *Terç,* but more than in the *Scala Dei,* which was written not only for a woman, but for a queen. As it is, he does mention the story of the tongue in the *Llibre de les dones,* but he softens the tone, saying, "God made her tongue from the tail of a goat, which never stops moving," and adds, "But these are fripperies, that no one ought believe."[88] Hence, the anecdote is defused, and turned into a humorous entertainment. Indeed, he follows it up with another: "God made Woman from the rib of her husband and from his bones. Now, when you knock bones together they make noise, and so for that reason, where women are around is always a lot of chatter."[89] This is exactly the same story that Martín de Córdoba would include in his *Jardín de nobles doncellas* (*Garden of Noble Maidens*), a book he wrote for Isabel the Catholic.[90]

How the *Llibre de les dones* Says What It Has to Say

Like most didactic treatises of this genre, the *Llibre de les dones* is divided into two parts. The first comprises a short introduction to the topic and a brief analysis of the nature of women, while the second is much longer and considers the five stages of womanhood according to Eiximenis: young girls, young women, married women, widows, and religious women (see table 1).[91] Eiximenis himself explains this structure to Sanxa in his

87. *Terç,* chap. 1948, published as part of *Contes i faules,* 67–68. See also Wittlin, "Francesc Eiximenis and the Sins."

88. *LD,* I:21.

89. *LD,* I:21. See Viera, "L'humor," 162.

90. Córdoba, *Jardín de nobles doncellas,* 17.

91. Virginity, marriage, and widowhood were the three stages in the life of a woman according to most medieval and early modern thinkers, both secular and religious. For example, the Venetian humanist Giovanni Caldiera (c. 1400–1474), Friar Cherubino da Siena, and the sixteenth-century Valencian humanist Joan Lluís Vives (1493–1540) in his *Education of a Christian Woman* (1523) used similar schemata. Caldiera proposed five categories of women, arranged in chronological progression: virgins (including unmarried women and nuns), wives and mothers, and widows, and two generic categories: servants and prostitutes (who qualify neither as virgins nor as wives). See King, "Personal, Domestic, and Republican Values," 552 and 554–57; King, *Venetian Humanism,* chap. 2; Silleras-Fernandez, "Between Expectation and Desire"; Viera "The Structure and Division."

Table 1. The Structure of the Llibre de les dones

First part
Dedication to Sanxa, Countess of Prades
On women in general (chaps. 1–13)
Second part
About women in particular (chaps. 14–396)
Five stages for women
- Young girls (chaps. 14–18)
- Young women (chaps. 19–30)
- Married women (chaps. 31–94)
- Widows (chaps. 95–100)
- Religious women (chaps. 101–396)
  - Seven treatises
    1. Teleological virtues (chaps. 101–39)
    2. Cardinal virtues (chaps. 140–84)
    3. Ten Commandments (chaps. 185–214)
    4. Seven deadly sins (chaps. 215–58)
    5. Five corporeal senses (chaps. 259–74)
    6. On religion (chaps. 275–353)
    7. On contemplation (chaps. 354–95)

Afterword addressed to Sanxa, Countess of Prades (chap. 396)

dedication, presenting women "arranged basically as regards the glory of God, and to His benefit."[92] In his view, as in the popular and learned opinion of the time, a woman's life span was configured according to her relationship with men (and God), and sustained by her familial and reproductive roles. Hence, the most substantial sections focus on women as wives, and on women who serve God.

The first stage of life that Eiximenis describes in the *Llibre de les dones* is childhood, which is seen as lasting to the age of twelve. His foundation for this section is Cicero's popular *De officiis,* infused with certain Franciscan ideals. Chief among these was the necessity to teach young girls self-control and instill in them devotion to God and the Virgin Mary. Eiximenis provides advice on how to build character in young girls, which is primarily rooted in strict obedience to their parents, who are allowed to use physical discipline for their daughters, as long as it is not excessive. The use of physical violence in the domestic setting was common at this time, and is documented in many other books of advice, such as the near-contemporary English treatise *What the Good Wife Taught Her Daughter.*[93]

92. *LD,* I:8.
93. Dronzek, "Gendered Theories of Education," 146.

Eiximenis believed that young women should behave with discipline and embrace silence. They should speak only if asked, and should not shout or laugh too loud, or look people in the eyes, or sit by the window (to avoid glimpsing the temptations of the outside world). Clearly this was a regimen for aristocrats and wealthy burghers. They were to be taught to control their appetite, and eschew excessive drinking; this, according to Eiximenis, "because it is extremely unsightly and a terrible mark on a girl or young woman to be accustomed to drink, and to be found drunk on occasion, whether greatly or slightly."[94] Other practical advice drawn from *De officiis* included the notion that laziness and idleness are sources of moral corruption; therefore, children and young women were to be kept busy doing tasks appropriate to their gender, such as spinning and embroidery.[95] This was not advice the author reserved only for girls; as spelled out in his *Regiment de la cosa pública,* idleness did not befit either gender. Prayer was, of course, the best of all activities, and hence, Eiximenis laid out a program of prayer suitable for girls. He recommended the memorization of a selection that would be appropriate for various religious holidays, and saw key prayers—the Pater Noster, Ave Maria, and Credo in Deum—as obligatory learning. Non-Christians—the Jews and Muslims who were so numerous in Valencia and the Crown of Aragon—were to be avoided, lest they contaminate the young girl.[96] In sum, from their early years, women were to be taught to be submissive and devout, to be obedient, and to respect the "natural order" ordained by God.

The next section in Eiximenis's chronological schematic of womanhood is dedicated to young women, or "maidens" (*doncellas*). Drawing on John of Salisbury's *Policraticus,* he imagines the etymology of *doncella* as deriving from *Domus in cella,* or "room in the house of God."[97] He discerns two types of maidens: those who are destined for the convent, and those who are destined for marriage. He extols the moral superiority of virginity, appealing to biblical tradition and the church fathers, such as Jerome, but also to secular literature and folk legends. He even cites the virgin's gift of being able to approach the otherwise elusive unicorn as testament to the virtue of chastity. Virginity had been an obsession for patristic authors, and also for medieval theologians, who put widows, married women, and virgins in different categories of salvation: married women would receive a thirty-fold

94. *LD,* I:33.
95. *LD,* I:34.
96. *LD,* I:31.
97. *LD,* I:36.

blessing in heaven; widows, a sixty-fold; but virgins, a hundred-fold.[98] As Saint Paul put it, "If they do not have self-control, let them marry: for it is better to marry than to burn."[99] Consistent with the spirit of over a millennium of Christian exegesis, Eiximenis was pushing women into chastity and into renouncing sexual pleasure; women who succeeded found themselves outside, or escaped, the "sexual economy of marriage."[100] In fact, the church fathers even stated that those who renounced their sexual life were granted a particular status considered by some scholars as pertaining to a sort of non-sexual "third gender," not dissimilar to eunuchs.[101] Eiximenis echoes these ideas and presents virginity and chastity as linked to physical and moral well-being. Michael Solomon and Montserrat Piera note that these notions reflect medieval medical discourse—that disease could be caused by or represent a punishment for sin.[102] Piera mentions, for example, that Eiximenis does not hesitate to associate plague and leprosy both with vice and with women—a warning to men as to how dangerous sexual contact with women could be.[103]

But Eiximenis was also concerned to protect young women, both for their own good, and for the good of the men they might otherwise lead into temptation. Thus, he urged women to maintain a chaste appearance, and to be on their guard lest they seduce some unwitting male. They were to wear modest clothes, and to be sure that they walked and spoke like virtuous women: "Clothes and good manners show who the person is."[104] Like the authors of the courtesy books circulating in the period, Eiximenis linked proper clothing, polite behavior, and moral integrity. Fashion worried Eiximenis, and he vociferously condemned new styles that were too seductive, particularly those coming from France. In fact, French conduct books from roughly the same period, like the *Livre pour l'enseignement de ses filles du Chevalier de La Tour Landry* (*Book for the Education of His Daughters, by the Knight of*

98. Clark, "Purgatory, Punishment, and the Discourse," 170. Eiximenis stated in his *Llibre de les dones:* "The fifth that is promised us in Paradise is awarded double to those who are married. Thus says the gloss on that passage, which is in Luke 8, when Jesus Christ says that the good ground yields a thirty-fold harvest, or sixty-fold, or one-hundred fold. The gloss says: the state of marriage yields the harvest of thirty-fold, of widowhood that of sixty-fold, and that of virginity one-hundred fold." *LD,* I:146.

99. 1 Corinthians 7:9.

100. This expression is borrowed from Carlson and Weisl, *Constructions of Widowhood,* 6.

101. See Clark, *Women in the Early Church,* 17; and Carlson and Weisl, *Constructions of Widowhood,* 2. For contrasting ways of conceptualizing gender and the religious, see the argument for a third gender in Murray, "One Flesh, Two Sexes," 37; and a contrary view (which argues rather for "multiple variations on the basic two [genders]"), in Karras, "Thomas Aquinas's Chastity Belt," 53.

102. Solomon, "Fictions of Infection," 283–84. See also Solomon, *The Literature of Misogyny.*

103. Piera, "No és al món malícia," 319–20.

104. *LD,* I:43.

La Tour Landry; 1371–72), *Le ménagier de Paris* (*The Goodman of Paris;* 1394), and the *Livre de trois vertus* (*Book of the Three Virtues;* 1405) of Christine de Pizan, each incorporated similar clerically inspired attacks on luxury and decadent fashion.[105] This was no mere curmudgeonly puritanism; this was a time in which clothing reflected social station, in which styles and materials used by the European elite were changing rapidly and pushing the boundaries of acceptability, and in which authorities were enacting sumptuary laws in order to temper the subversive potential of new styles. It was precisely in this period that we see, as Roberta Krueger puts it, "the emergence of fashion as a contested area of women's agency and transgression."[106] Eiximenis, like other moralists before him, imagined a clear connection between appearance, virginity, honor, and reputation—the latter signifying, in the words of the anonymous author of the thirteenth-century *Miroir des bonnes femmes* (*The Good Wife's Guide*), "being untouched by malicious gossip."[107] A woman's honor was attached to her body. This sentiment was echoed in the anonymous Castilian text *Castigos y doctrinas que un sabio daba a sus hijas* (*Lessons and Instructions That a Wise Man Gave to His Daughters*): "Another thing that you must do to preserve your modesty is not enjoy hearing dirty or smutty talk, even if said by other women."[108]

Virginity, however, was not necessarily to be the goal of women; after all, marriage had a long tradition in Western Christianity, and had been liturgically formalized as a sacrament in the twelfth century. In Eiximenis's view, women who married should not neglect their bodies or their appearance so as to render themselves unattractive to their husbands. Cleanliness and modest dress were the ideal to be aspired to, for both women and men.[109] But if women insisted on dressing immodestly or wearing makeup, it was not only they who were deserving of censure, but also their parents or husband, for having allowed them to do so.[110] But, curiously, for Eiximenis this was not so much an issue of discouraging lust or mitigating physical desire; at bottom—and here he cites classical authority—it was an economic issue. This is to say, if women frittered away their money on vain luxuries like clothing, jewelry,

105. See Krueguer, "'Nouvelles choses,'" 51; Davis, *Fashion, Culture, and Identity,* 14–16; Hughes, "Regulating Women's Fashion."

106. Krueger, "'Nouvelles choses,'" 56.

107. Ashley, "The Miroir des Bonnes Femmes," 97; Greco and Rose, *The Good Wife's Guide.*

108. Francomano, "Castigos y doctrinas que un sabio daba a sus hijas," 269.

109. *Terç del Chrestià,* chap. 714.

110. *LD,* I:39.

and makeup, they were wasting money that could otherwise have been given to charity or to the church.[111]

Finally, young women are exhorted to pray, and their devotional exercises are to be more intense and focused than when they were children. They were also encouraged to fast on the major Christian feast days, although they were to be excused if they were ill, or even merely too slim. Eiximenis even recommended particular devotional exercises that might be helpful to young women, signaling the saints who were best suited to intervening in the context of the various problems that young women typically faced. In order to better focus their piety, he recommended that young women seek out a spiritual adviser, a cleric who would coach them in their devotion and provide intercession, and thereby fortify their relationship with God—"Thus it is good to establish a special friendship with some 'saint' who might mediate between God and us."[112] Clearly, there is an element of self-interest here; Eiximenis is effectively promoting his own service as spiritual guide to Sanxa.

The third section of the *Llibre de les dones* turns to the matter of the Christian wife, and, once again, although the book is meant to focus on women, Eiximenis's prescriptions could be read equally by, and applied equally to, men. This section of the book would certainly have had a particular relevance for Sanxa, given that she remained a wife, despite her unilateral separation from her husband. Medieval Christian marriage was built on four basic principles: monogamy, indissolubility, exogamy, and consent. Christians were to have one spouse and one spouse only, who would be their spouse forever, who was not too closely related (that is, within the canonically prohibited four degrees of separation), and to whom they were joined by mutual consent. Never mind that in practice, Christians—particularly those of the aristocracy—evaded, ignored, or overrode these principles through dispensations paid for in gold, contrived annulments, open and repeated infidelities (overwhelmingly on the part of men), the marriage of cousins, and infant or minor betrothals and other nonconsensual arrangements.

And, indeed, the church made consent the single most important element in matrimony, a sentiment echoed by Eiximenis: "Neither a father nor a mother can give a husband to anyone without their consent."[113] But in practical terms, medieval marriages were for the most part an extension of the business of patrimony, and they were concluded thanks to arrangements made by the families of the bride and the groom, who were preoccupied

111. *LD,* I:46.
112. *LD,* I:40.
113. Eiximenis, *Dotzè,* 415.

for the most part with the dowry or dower, or the political alliances and advantages the marriage might bring. As Eiximenis's own language unconsciously reflects, it tended to be women who were given away against their will, although young men of the upper nobility were also sometimes promised away as infants or children by their parents. To ensure the element of consent and to reinforce the stability of the union, Eiximenis advises women not to marry before the age of eighteen (and men not before twenty-two), and to chose a partner of more or less the same age and social status.[114] There is a sense that consent has an immanent and contingent quality, and in a line that would probably have provoked Sanxa to contemplate her own situation, Eiximenis reminds husbands never to forget that "the wife is as a sister to her husband, and not a slave nor a servant."[115] He recommends that the husband treat his wife gently. Should a woman commit adultery, he does not consider it justifiable for her husband to take her life; rather—in another specific reference to Sanxa—adultery is legitimate grounds for either spouse to separate from the other.[116]

Marriage was, of course, the only licit avenue to sexual activity—activity that, in keeping with a long tradition of church teaching, was to be enjoyed for the sole purpose of procreation. As per the Pauline dictum referred to above, virginity and sexual abstinence were seen (by theologians and ideologues) as morally preferable, whereas marriage was seen as a means of avoiding fornication. Drawing still further on the Apostle, Eiximenis refers directly to the "conjugal debt" incumbent on both spouses in marriage: "Thus, the man in knowing his wife, complies with the command of God; thus, the man, in knowing his wife, or the lady in claiming the conjugal debt of the man, performs a virtuous and meritorious work."[117] But, for all this, the *Llibre de les dones* does not delve into the mechanical details of the sexual act—something that Eiximenis discusses at length in the "Treatise on Lust," contained in *El terç.* Here, he describes legitimate foreplay (and the passivity with which women ought to endure it), as well as the correct position for copulation (face-to-face, or "missionary," as Augustine prescribed).[118] This editorial omission is undoubtedly a consequence of the intended audience of the two books: the *Llibre de les dones* was to be read by Sanxa, and by other women, including women religious, for whom a detailed description of sexual activities would be inappropriate and embarrassing, whereas *El terç*

114. See Renedo, "La vida conjugal."
115. *LD,* I:129.
116. *LD,* I:94.
117. *LD,* I:104.
118. Viera, "Francesc Eiximenis on Women," 199–200.

was aimed at a primarily male readership, who being the active partners in these activities, needed to know the proper way to do things.

With this, the *Llibre de les dones* circles back to the importance of proper behavior, and of modest dress, and particularly the avoidance of the scandalous new fashions current at court. One of the important functions of dress, Eiximenis reveals, is to demarcate the genders, whose distinct roles are established a priori and by nature, and should not be blurred, and cannot be interchanged:

> Because to Man pertain those affairs of the household that are related to affairs of the world outside, such as relate to profit and business, such as buying, selling, and negotiating, attacking, and defending. Whereas the Wife has a duty to dedicate herself to raising the children, if there are any, and to the domestic and quotidian tasks of the household, such as preparing the food, decorating the house, spinning, and leave for the husband what is fitting, and serve him in his persona. And the husband should not spin, nor do anything that pertains to the office of the wife, nor should she do anything that pertains to the role of a husband. In this manner, the household remains well-ordered, while each carries out with diligence that which pertains to them, and the household will function well when each does what is fitting.[119]

Conservative as such an approach to domestic gender roles might seem to readers today, Eiximenis was quite progressive, not only in his view on the consequences of adultery, but in his view on the importance of female education. He was convinced that women should learn to read and write, in order to better and more effectively pursue a life of devotion through the reading of religious and edifying texts—such as those he himself was producing.[120] But reading and writing also had an earthly role in marriage, given that noble and bourgeois husbands were often away from home on business for extended periods. In such cases, being literate would enable a wife to communicate with her absent husband in confidence, without having to resort to an intermediary or a scribe. Here, Eiximenis holds up the example of a saintly queen, "Constança," the daughter of the king of Mallorca, who became a paradigmatic figure for Eiximenis's views on spousal relations.[121] This is a theme he will return to in greater deal in *El dotzè,* when he clarifies that women are not just to read anything, but that they should

119. *LD,* I:114.
120. *LD,* I:92–93.
121. *LD,* I:91. For Constança, see chapter 3.

limit themselves to devotional and exhortational material (such as he himself composed), and eschew songs and poetry, fiction, and literature of entertainment, all of which served only to distract the reader from a life of virtue.[122]

The fourth section of the *Llibre de les dones* turns to widows. Although brief, consisting of only five chapters, this section of the book is particularly interesting because Eiximenis presents widowhood not as a state of suffering and loss, but of liberation. Widowhood, according to Eiximenis, is a state in which women can turn their attention to the spiritual—hence, this section overlaps considerably with the final section, which discusses women who have taken the vows of a religious life. Moreover, it bears a certain relevance to the case of Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, who, although not a widow, was living like one—a single woman on the margins of a religious community, the convent of Clare nuns in Valencia. Citing Saint Jerome, Eiximenis presents the widow's calling as serving God; those who do so, who comport themselves like true widows, will receive God's blessings, as had Judith, and Anna the Prophetess.[123] Hence, Sanxa's mission would be follow in the illustrious footsteps of the Prophetess, by making devotion the focus of her life. Turning to *On the Christian life* (*De vita christiana*) of Saint Augustine, Eiximenis goes on to describe three basic types of widows: chaste and devotional widows, widows who care for their children and households, and lusty widows. The former two groups are to be rewarded; those who fall in the third, on the other hand, are relegated by God to eternal death.[124] For Eiximenis, widowhood (and widowerhood) provided an opportunity for women (and men) to escape the body, to eschew carnality, and to approach God. Remarriage, therefore, was not recommended, but rather was seen—very much in a Pauline sense—as a last resort for avoiding adultery and fornication.[125]

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122. In the *Dotzè* he makes the same point in a section referring to the Roman emperor Arcadius (395–408): "Why young women and ladies ought to be taught to read . . . The fourth [reason] is because women are irritable and melancholic with little strength there is nothing in the world that can push them to moderate the said passions like a good book, the sayings of saints, and Holy Scripture. The fifth is because women are normally very tormented and sad, with many miseries, for which ills the best remedy is to have good books." *Dotzè,* ed. Wittlin, II-1:196–97 (chap. 554) (Cantavella, "Lectura i cultura," 119 n. 22); cf. Cantavella, "Lectura i cultura," 109–17.

123. "That is to say that the widow is she who is in the true state of widowhood, who is neither falsely nor faithlessly a widow, she whom He will bless, giving her His special grace, He shows them His love and special affection, just as with the saintly widows of the past, just as with Judith, and Anna the Prophetess, and many others." *LD,* II:145.

124. "Saint Augustine, in *De vida cristiana,* says the following: 'There are three types of widows. The first includes those who are accustomed to serve God, and these are heavenly. The second are those who occupy themselves raising their young children and maintaining the household through work and effort, and these if they fall usually recover. The third are those who occupy themselves in pleasures and delights, and for those God reserves eternal death." *LD,* II:152.

125. *LD,* II:148; Viera and Piqué, *La dona,* 22. See also Brines Garcia, *La filosofía social,* 293–303.

Perhaps the most interesting aspect of Eiximenis's view of widowhood is that it presents an opportunity for female autonomy. He recognized that—for women—marriage was in fact a form of subjugation, given that men always "endeavor to tyrannize women" (*volen tiranegar a les dones*).[126] Therefore, instead of remarrying a mortal, earthly husband, he recommends that widows "marry" Jesus Christ by devoting their lives to prayer.[127] And in fact, it was this sort of relationship that Sanxa was flirting with; without being a widow, she was living as one, and without being a nun, she was living like one—living in seclusion from the tyranny of a corporeal husband. On the practical side, Eiximenis's advice—once again citing Jerome (here, *Epistle* 34)—is that widows should avoid the company of men in order to prevent the spread of gossip and rumors that could damage their reputations.[128] Hence, the convent also comes to function as a refuge for Sanxa's name and the reputation of her lineage, and for the fortunes of her wider family; or to see it another way, she was now under guard of the convent, as she had previously been under guard of her son, her husband, and her father. Nevertheless, the convent did not represent a space that was removed from the world of men and male authority. It was a feminine domain, to be sure, but it was one that was by necessity under masculine supervision—the supervision of equally chaste and "liberated" priests, who were required for the sacred rituals, Mass and confession, that were essential to the life of Christian devotion.

This brings Eiximenis to the final and most substantial section of the *Llibre de les dones,* which is dedicated to religious women, and is divided into a series of treatises intended to guide religious women on the path of servitude to God. This was no basic primer of Christian doctrine; it was intended for women who were, like Sanxa, drawn from the aristocracy, or from the urban bourgeoisie—women who would have been literate and familiar with the essentials of the Christian faith. Hence, Eiximenis not only lays out a full catechism for these women, but goes beyond doctrine to provide strategies for living in harmony with God's will. Fundamental to this is following a way of life that is pleasing to God and his church—one based on a code of strict moral conduct and profound religious devotion. And while the argument is framed for women who have taken up the habit, Eiximenis provides

126. *LD,* II:146. This kind of reasoning can also be encountered in contemporary *romancero* poetry, which included refrains such as "Why should I want to marry, if my husband will boss me around?"; or in which a "badly married" (*mal casada*) woman cursed her husband: "May he be enslaved/who enslaved me. See Flores and Flores, *The Defiant Muse,* 14 and 16; also McNerney "Recovering Their Voices."

127. *LD,* II:149.

128. *LD,* II:151.

a prescription that would be valid for any Christian, man or woman. The foundations of his recommendations would be recognizable to most contemporaries, particularly those of the aristocracy who were familiar with the didactic genre of "mirrors of princes": the theological virtues (faith, hope, and charity), the cardinal virtues (prudence, temperance, fortitude, and justice), the Ten Commandments, the seven deadly sins, and the five corporeal senses.

But the central part of this section on religious women is a treatise on contemplation, which was subsequently excerpted and read independently. This treatise lays out a program of spiritual exercises, prayer, and fasting aimed at mystically uniting the faithful with God. It is particularly interesting because even though it seems totally prescriptive, it permits a level of individual agency that is far greater than that described in the other sections of the book. Here, Eiximenis lays out three ways (*viae*) of attaining union with the Godhead—the purgative, or *purificativo;* the illuminative, or *iluminativa;* and the perfective, or *unitiva*—and prescribes concrete devotional exercises for the attainment of these states, including what to say, do, and think while performing them.[129] It is somewhat ironic that Eiximenis should compose this section for Sanxa, who was, at this point, yearning to leave the convent and resume a life of worldly freedom and independence. But it would prove to be the part of the *Llibre de les dones* that was most enduring, and represents the essence of Eiximenis's views on spiritual devotion. This section of his text became the core of the *Scala Dei,* or *Tractat de la contemplació* (*Treatise on Contemplation*), the book that Eiximenis wrote for Maria de Luna only a year or two after having completed the *Llibre de les dones.*[130]

The Author, the Book, and the Patroness

On the final page of the *Llibre de les dones* Eiximenis returns to Sanxa, signing off as "he who gives thanks to God for having finished this book, begging the pardon of the Countess, to whom it is offered first and foremost."[131] Again, Eiximenis presents himself humbly before the "most high and revered Lady-Countess" (*senyora comptessa molt alta e reverent*) declaring his hope that she will read it, like it, and find it useful. In reference to his earlier allusion to the goat's tail and the origin of woman's tongue, he quips, "That for all, [Sanxa,] may you give thanks to the Lord our God, who as it pleases him,

129. See chapter 3.
130. See chapter 3.
131. *LD,* II:572.

makes the truth be spoken to people by the tongue of beasts," before closing with a final apology: "Each of us in this life err and fail"—including both him and Sanxa.[132]

The *Libre de les dones* represents the first iteration of Eiximenis's approach to feminine devotion and morality, and it is in this phase that the relationship between author, work, and patroness to whom the work was dedicated, and the tensions that characterized this relationship, are most clear. The friar not only dedicated the book to Sanxa, but wrote it as a response to her specific personal circumstances, and in order to guide her, first and foremost, and a larger feminine readership, in the second place. The structure of the book—a chronological categorization of women's experiences—reflects commonly held notions of the arc of women's lives and the hierarchy of their experience, from child to maiden to married woman to widow to nun, and is intended as a road map for Sanxa for her own experience, precisely as she was moving out of the worldly phase of conjugal life. It also reflects a cycle of chastity and virtue. Women begin as children, as innocents (chapters 14–18); next, they become young women (chapters 19–30), and as they reach a sexual awakening they have the opportunity either to remain chaste and virtuous, by joining a religious institution, or to live in the world of the flesh by marrying (chapters 31–94). Those who choose the convent advance immediately to a superior state, a virginal life that brings them close to God. Those who marry and outlive their husbands to become widows (chapters 95–100) are presented with the second opportunity to choose virtue by reclaiming the life of chastity they gave up in matrimony. In either case, the highest goal of women is the same: the life of the religious, which is why the bulk of the book (close to 70 percent of the text) is dedicated to nuns (chapters 100–396)—women who choose to experience God in the most profound way their gender permits. In Eiximenis's mind this should be the goal of all women: to live virtuously throughout all stages of life, to acknowledge that they are subject to men and the natural order, but when given the opportunity to chose God over nature, to take it. Some hear the calling as maidens; others have to wait until widowhood or, as in the case of Sanxa, separation. Whatever their situation Eiximenis aims to provide them with a guide.

Traditionally, scholars have explained the disparity of emphasis among the sections of the *Llibre de les dones* as indicating that Eiximenis considered the monastic life the most pure and ideal, as he says that "the condition of a religious is far closer to God than any other in this present life."[133] That may

132. *LD,* II:572.
133. *LD,* II:153.

be the case, but the emphasis on the contemplative life in the *Llibre de les dones* was also clearly meant for Sanxa, whom Eiximenis was endeavoring to steer into taking the vows of a Clarissan nun, at the very time she was taking refuge in the convent. In other words, it was a book written to provide guidance for a specific woman with particular problems, but it would be taken up as a model for feminine virtue and piety across the peninsula and beyond over the course of the next two centuries. This is all the more ironic given that, in the end, Sanxa eschewed Eiximenis's moral prescriptions and tried to return to the world and her cherished castle at Torres Torres. But a text, once committed to the page, can take on a life of its own, and this is precisely what happened to Eiximenis's words in the *Llibre de les dones.* However, Eiximenis himself was not quite done with the work; he would revise and repackage it in a new format for a new patroness—the new queen, Maria de Luna—who represented for Eiximenis a departure from the worldly and foreign decadence of Joan and Violant, and an opportunity to correct the unfortunate and dangerous turn court culture had taken under the previous monarchs, and to broadcast his ideas within sympathetic royal circles.

Chapter 3

Fit for a Queen

The Scala Dei*, Franciscan Queenship, and Maria de Luna (Barcelona, c. 1396–1410)*

> [The queen] owes it to her husband at all times to conserve the peace in the kingdom and ensure swift, righteous, and clear justice to their peoples, and not under any circumstances act as a tyrant, but rather to show herself likable and dear to her people, and take counsel from a small group chosen from among them, and fearing God, and eschewing greed, and who are committed to the common good and not their own affairs.
>
> Francesc Eiximenis, *Scala Dei* (1396 or 1397) (BNE: Ms. 92, f. 14v)

In the 1390s, Francesc Eiximenis found a new audience for his ideas regarding feminine virtue and piety, and reused parts of the *Llibre de les dones* to write a new book, the *Scala Dei* (*Ladder of God*), for a new patroness, Maria de Luna (b. c. 1358). Maria had been Countess of Luna, a powerful and independent seigneur in her own right, before becoming queen of the Crown of Aragon (1396–1406). The *Scala Dei* is at once a sort of devotional text and a book of prayers, and includes essays on the virtues, the Ten Commandments, and the seven deadly sins, as well as a treatise on penance, and another on contemplation. Critics tend to consider it one of Eiximenis's minor works, but, in fact (as will be argued in the following chapters), it was extremely influential both in its original form and over the course of a long afterlife, and comprises a key to understanding spirituality and religious reform in the context of the Iberian Peninsula of the fifteenth century. The *Scala Dei* was not only published on a number of occasions (1494, 1501, and 1523) in its original format and language, Catalan, but was read and esteemed by no less than three very important religious figures who moved within the entourage of the Catholic monarchs: Hernando de Talavera (1428–1507; confessor to the queen, and the first archbishop of Granada), Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros (1436–1517; confessor to the queen, Grand Inquisitor, Crusader,

and founder of the Universidad de Alcalá de Henares), and his cousin, García Jiménez de Cisneros (1455–1510, abbot of the monastery of Montserrat, and a proponent of a new spirituality that resonated with Eiximenis and anticipated the *Devotio moderna*.[1] The *Scala Dei* was a work that would later appear in many libraries, including that of Isabel the Catholic, and would influence Ignatius Loyola as he crafted his *Exercitia spiritualia* (*Spiritual Exercises;* c. 1522–24).

But before the influence of the *Scala Dei* on Castilian religious and literary culture can be assessed, it is necessary to analyze it within its Catalano-Aragonese context and consider Eiximenis's motives and aims in writing this book for Maria. The *Llibre de les dones* and the *Scala Dei* were the only books that he dedicated to women, and even though they could be used as guides for Christians of either gender, they were principally intended as blueprints for feminine piety, and specifically to mold the practices of Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós and Maria de Luna, respectively. As it happened, Sanxa and Maria knew each other personally—both spent a considerable amount of time in Valencia, were members of the extended royal family, and had a common friend in Francesc Eiximenis. So why did Eiximenis dedicate a rehashing of Sanxa's book to the queen? Why did he not write Maria an entirely original text, instead of reusing so much of his *Llibre de les dones*? What did he want to convey to her? What was his agenda, and how did she react to it? This chapter aims to answer questions such as these, while historicizing the writing of a book that would in subsequent centuries be detached from its original context, and be read and understood in very different ways.

Courting the Queen

It seems that Maria, like Sanxa before her, had been asking Eiximenis for a book for some time, or so the friar acknowledges in the dedication, when he explains the purpose of the work:

> Most High Lady, many times your great Ladyship has encouraged me, for the improvement of your spiritual life, to prepare as you request

1. The *Devotio moderna* was a religious movement that originated toward the end the fourteenth century. Gerard Groote, a Dutch preacher and founder of the Brethren of the Common Life, is one of the key founders. It advocates for a pious and intense relationship with God and methodical praying. Sometimes it overlaps with other reforms, as Whinnom pointed out: "There were many reformers before the Reformation, and if one defines the *devotio moderna* only in general terms (hostility to traditional scholasticism, emphasis on a return to the Bible, a 'movement of obedient revolt from the stereotyped routine of passable salvation' in Previté-Orton's phrase), one is in some danger of confusing its manifestations with those of the Franciscan reform." Whinnom, "The Supposed Sources," 47. See also Van Engen, *Sisters and Brothers;* and Roest, "Observant Reform," 446–57.

> some little book from which you might derive some guidance or light to better guard you from any offence to God, and that you might most aptly enjoy in all virtue, and better please God: for which, Most High Lady, I—wishing to satisfy your pious intentions, and for the sound increase of your devotion—have assembled the following book.[2]

By means of this gift Eiximenis sought to cement his relationship with Maria—whom he had known since she was a child, and who now, as queen, was a figure worthy of a particularly active interest. For the friar, having Maria as a close ally would help him to realize his ambitions for the reform of his order and the reconfiguration of the culture of the royal court. One can tell from the tone of the book that Eiximenis clearly envisioned himself in a position of authority over the queen, her rank notwithstanding, and for the most part, the book reads like a highly prescriptive manual of spiritual exercises, rather than a series of deferential recommendations. Because of her gender, Eiximenis saw Maria essentially as a passive subject—one who should be willing to submit to the model he (a man and a cleric) had devised. At this time women were considered susceptible to excesses of passion; hence, conduct and devotional literature were intended to calm them and—following Saint Augustine—to redirect the troublesome influences of passions on the body and the mind to more salubrious and pious ends.

Undoubtedly, the friar understood that Maria's resources and prestige as queen were so great that she had the potential to change the religio-cultural orientation of the royal court, and to undertake large-scale projects of patronage. Moreover, from the outset, he clearly had just such a project in mind: to nurture in the Crown of Aragon the reform movement of Observant Franciscanism, then in its infancy. Specifically, he hoped Maria would build the first Observant convent in the Iberian Peninsula. As noted in chapter 1, Eiximenis had not felt close to the previous queen, Violant de Bar, who—along with the former king, Joan I, "the Careless" or "the Hunter"—was seen, not only by the Franciscan moralist, but by many of their contemporaries, as overly frivolous, too French, and scandalously neglectful of the affairs of state. With the ascent of Maria de Luna to the throne, however, the Crown received a new queen—one who had already established a pious and unblemished reputation for herself. Hence, Maria's rise presented a clear opportunity for an activist and reformer like Eiximenis. Tellingly, Eiximenis did not dedicate this book, or any other, to Maria's husband, King Martí I, despite the latter's well-known piety (in his own time he was referred to as

2. BNE: Ms. 92, f. 1r.

"the Ecclesiastic"). Eiximenis understood that, in order to effect the changes he hoped to, he would need to have the queen on his side—and he was not the only one who understood this. It is in this context that we should read not only Eiximenis's *Scala Dei,* but also the other contemporary devotional manual that was produced for Maria, Antoni Canals's *De arra anima.*

More or less at the same time as Eiximenis, the Dominican friar Antoni Canals dedicated his own work to her—a Catalan translation of Hugh of Saint Victor's twelfth-century *De arra anima.* Through this translation Canals was endeavoring (parallel to Eiximenis) to turn the reading tastes of the queen and her ladies away from the frivolities of romance toward more edifying and pious material, and promote a culture of devotional exercise. In his words, his goal was to undermine "the treatise on Venus, which is foolishly deified by carnal lovers."[3] Canals wrote to Maria: "And I beg, High Lady, Your mercy that this treatise may be recommended specifically to your ladies-in-waiting, so that, just as it does to Your Highness, it may serve them as an instruction for honest living and about our doctrine; as it is very inspirational as regards chaste works and the singular love of Jesus Christ."[4] Following the same line, in the preface to his Catalan translation of the *Liber de modo bene vivendi ad sororem* (*Carta de Sant Bernat a sa germana;* or *Letter from Saint Bernard to His Sister*)—a work that he attributed to Bernard of Clairvaux—Canals complained about various profane books that were popular among the ladies of court, namely, *De vetula, Lancelot, Tristany,* the *Roman de Renar,* and Ovid's *Ars amandi*.[5] In the dedicatory prologue to the *Carta,* addressed to Galceran de Sentmenat, Martí I's chamberlain, Canals aimed to inspire in the influential courtier the love of books (*amor de libres*). According to the Dominican it was important to limit oneself to "good books" (*llibres aprovats*), if for no other reason than it would be impossible to read every book within one's lifetime, and therefore one should not waste time on improper ones.[6] Even here, however, Canals's true objective was to change female behavior, and in particular the reading habits of the queen's ladies-in-waiting.[7] Hence, he justifies the fact that he dedicated this text—which was intended for women—to Galceran, who was a man, by saying, "It would be of great shame to a

3. See chapter 1.

4. Canals, *De arra ànima,* 125; see also Riquer, *Història de la literatura,* 2:457.

5. Scholars today do not believe that Bernard of Clairvaux (1090–1153) wrote this text at all, but rather an anonymous author who has been identified by some as Thomas de Froidmont. See Bratsch-Prince, "La fuerza del prólogo," 350. The works mentioned by Canals were all literature of entertainment and chivalric texts.

6. Canals, *De arra ànima,* 420.

7. Canals, *De arra ànima,* 422–23.

man should a woman be more virtuous than he."[8] Like Eiximenis's opera, this work resonated with the popular tastes in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, and Isabel the Catholic kept a Spanish translation of it, as well as the *Llibre de les dones,* in her library.[9]

Thus, despite the fact that Canals and Eiximenis had very different styles and approaches to literature, they coincided in their goal of reconfiguring the literary tastes of the courtly elite. Hence, in the first volume of *Lo Crestià,* the Franciscan inveighed against people who wasted their time reading "lies, false and useless things," such as *Lo libre de la Guineu, Tristany de Leonís, Roland,* and similar works—many of the same works that raised Canals's hackles.[10] Unlike Eiximenis, however, the Dominican was a participant in the proto-humanistic movement of the late fourteenth-century Crown of Aragon. Apart from composing his own works and producing Catalan versions of texts of Christian theology and devotion, he undertook translations of both classics and contemporary popular literature, such as Seneca's *De providencia* (*On Providence*), Valerius Maximus's *Dictorum factorumque memorabilium,* and sections of Petrarch's *Africa,* translated as *Scipió i Aníbal* (*Scipio and Hanibal*). This marked a contrast with his Franciscan colleague, who eschewed secular literature (aside from political treatises), was more encyclopedic in his approach, and preferred to compose rather lengthy and exhaustive original works. The *Scala Dei* is, in fact, one of his shortest compositions.

The *Scala Dei* ended up being a short book only because Eiximenis did not have much time to write a lot of new material—Maria de Luna's ascent to the throne was swift and unexpected, and he wanted his text to be presented to the new queen as soon as possible. Maria came to power as a result of the sudden death of her brother-in-law, King Joan I, on 19 May 1396. The mysterious and not entirely unsuspicious circumstances of the king's death, which apparently resulted from the king's accidental fall from his horse when he went off alone in pursuit of a stag, left the *infant* Martí, Joan's younger brother, as heir. As Martí was far off in Sicily on campaign at the time, and given that the kingdom was in immediate danger from pretenders, rebels, and invaders, Maria, a seasoned seigneur, already in middle age, was immediately acclaimed as the new queen, and as Martí's lieutenant general.[11]

As Andrés Ivars proposed, the *Scala Dei* was most likely intended as a sort of coronation gift; hence, its date of composition would have been 1396–97.[12]

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8. Canals, *De arra ànima,* 421.
9. Bratsch-Prince, "La fuerza del prólogo," 349 and 351.
10. See *Lo Crestià,* I:chap. 342; Ivars, "El escritor," 239.
11. Silleras-Fernandez, "Spirit and Force," 78–90.
12. Ivars, "Franciscanismo de la reina," 261 and 268. See also Ivars, "Quien es el autor?" 116.

The purpose of the book was to guide Maria's transformation into what Eiximenis imagined was a true Christian queen.[13] Moreover, in Maria's case this would have real consequences—she was no mere royal consort, but a serving ruler, exercising the power of the monarchy through the medium of the lieutenancy during her husband's absence. And, indeed, Eiximenis had every reason to expect the prospects were good; he would have been aware of Maria's tastes in reading, which—as far as the evidence shows—was more or less limited to religious literature. In fact, the royal couple showed, as Albert Hauf put it, a near obsession for sacred works, and read (or at least owned) even quite complex theological treatises.[14] True, she appreciated books that were pleasing as objects—ones that had elaborate covers and were richly illuminated—but unlike her husband, Martí, who, we know, also owned works of fiction, Maria seems to have stuck to devotional texts.[15]

Short on time, and rushing to put together something that would appeal to the queen, Eiximenis evidently came up with the idea of taking a good part of the very long section devoted to nuns and contemplation from the *Llibre de les dones* and using it as the core of the *Scala Dei*. To this he added some newly written sections, and then appended a new dedication, written especially for Maria. This was not the last time the friar would use this technique. The *Cercapou,* for example, a later work attributed to him, borrows whole chapters from the *Llibre de les dones.*[16] Similarly, his *Regiment de la cosa pública* (1383) is built around chapters 357–93 of the *Dotzè* of the *Crestià,* with some new material added.[17] Typical of medieval authors, Eiximenis simply did not subscribe to our modern notions of originality, plagiarism, and citation; therefore, he innocently used and reused material at his own

13. Both Massó i Torrents and Martí de Riquer think that the devotional was written at a later date, around the beginning of the fifteenth century. Ivars, on the other hand, situates the composition around 1396–97, in part because he identifies a *Book of Prayers* (*Llibre d'oracions*) for which the queen paid Mateo de Rada, an exchequer scribe (*escrivà de raciò*), 24 *sous* of Barcelona and 6 *diners* to illuminate. See the edition of the document, dated 12 April 1397, in Ivars, "Franciscanismo de la reina," 281; Barcelona, *Fra Francesc Eiximenis,* 436. In any case, all these dates are based on little more than conjecture. I would suggest that an earlier date makes more sense in view of the message of the book, and the fact that since he reused so much material to write it, it would not have taken him very long to finish.

14. Hauf, *D'Eiximenis a Sor Isabel,* 37–38.

15. Cingolani, "*Nos en leyr,*" 114–16; Riera, "La biblioteca." See also the inventory of his possessions made after his death by his widow, Margarida de Prades, which included his book collection, in Massó i Torrents, "Inventari de béns mobles"; and Miret i Sans, "Llibres y joyes," 220–22 and 224–27. See chapter 1.

16. Eiximenis, *Psalterium,* ed. Wittlin, 5; Wittlin, "Los problemas del *Cercapou.*"

17. The new part added to the *Regiment* is a dedication to the city councillors; see Ivars, "Franciscanismo," 269. Later, the printed edition added a further dedicatory elegy to the city of Valencia (*elogi a la ciutat de València*). See also Wittlin, "De lo *llibre.*"

discretion. In the Middle Ages there was no sense of literary or creative property as we have nowadays; footnotes were not a requirement, and citing sources was typically done not to recognize any type of debt to a particular text and/or author, but rather with the aim of showing one's own arguments in a more authoritative light.[18] Indeed, as will be discussed in the next chapter, in the fifteenth century García de Cisneros did the same thing with Eiximenis's *Scala Dei*—he abridged and adapted it, and gave no credit to or even mention of the original author.

That said, although the similarities between the *Llibre de les dones* and the *Scala Dei* are significant, and however much the latter may have borrowed from the former, they are, in fact, two very different works. The differences between the two can be seen in the balance of the text of each work, the separate agenda of each, and the distinct relationships Eiximenis was aiming to cultivate with Sanxa and Maria. Moreover, through their patronage the two women lent a particular authority to their respective texts, not only because their names were explicitly tied to them, but because to a certain extent, each work embodied or was informed by their particular values and expectations (at least as Eiximenis imagined them). As Pierre Bourdieu points out, acts of cultural production implicitly assert a claim to cultural legitimacy; in this case that claim was vouchsafed by the reputation and cachet of the two patronesses.[19]

For an ideologue and theologian like Eiximenis, who held very specific views on the nature of women and the function of gender, it would not be appropriate to present Maria de Luna in her guise as queen-lieutenant and governor—an active, independent political authority. Rather, he was obliged to portray her in the book in a secondary, dependent role, more befitting of a woman. For him, she was to be the consort who would give advice to her mate only when it was absolutely necessary, and who might help steer him under the protection of God—and more specifically, the Franciscan order—at a time when the church was plagued by monastic decadence, a schismatic papacy, and many other worldly problems. For him, feminine space was constructed around and limited to the home, the family, and the body.

For her part, although she remained an active and energetic ruler, the image that Eiximenis inspired Maria to cultivate became the kernel of her royal persona, or, as she preferred to call it in her letters, her "queenly dignity" (*dignitat reginal*). Without necessarily intending to do so, he coached her on how to project an image that enabled her to exercise power without

18. Constable, "Forgery and Plagiarism," 27.
19. Bourdieu, *The Field of Cultural Production,* 116.

upsetting contemporary sensibilities regarding gender roles. This was one of the key factors that contributed to her power to act and to wield authority. And while Eiximenis may have had a plan that was far more ambitious and grandiose—namely, to push her more fully into the world of the church, and to transform her into a Franciscan queen, and a pious heroine who would help him both to establish the Observant reform movement and to reform the religious culture of the court—Maria de Luna did indeed become the queen who launched the Observant reform movement in the Iberian Peninsula. That process would be concluded a century later thanks to the patronage of Isabel the Catholic, another queen who was also a reader of Eiximenis.

Francesc Eiximenis, Maria de Luna, and Martí I: Intertwined Lives

Maria de Luna was queen of the Crown of Aragon for ten years—from 1396 to 1406—while her husband, Martí I, ruled for four years longer, until his death in 1410.[20] Eiximenis had died one year earlier, in 1409, having taken up the miter of the Rousillonaise diocese of Elne (near Perpignan). Eiximenis was approximately thirty years older than Maria and Martí, and as such, he became a sort of paternal figure for them. Although he never served as their official confessor—a role played by other members of his order—he was one of the executors of Maria's last will and testament, together with King Martí, two Valencian noblemen, Gilabert de Centelles and Ramon de Riusec, and two fellow friars, Joan Eximeno and Bartomeu Borràs.[21] Together with Eiximenis, Borràs, a committed reformer and abbot of the convent of the Sancti Spiritu or Sant Esperit (Holy Spirit), an Observant house founded by the queen herself, Joan Eximeno, her confessor, and the abbess of the Poor Clares of Montblanc, charted Maria's religious development over the course of her reign.[22] In some ways, Eiximenis was the closest of all clerics to the king and queen; for example, during Maria's tenure as lieutenant of the troubled Kingdom of Valencia from 1401 to 1406, he was appointed to her governing council.

But the relationship between Eiximenis and Maria dated to long before her unexpected ascent to the throne. Maria was the daughter of Brianda

20. For the context of Maria de Luna's reign and her patronage of Franciscans at her court and beyond, see Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 122–32; and Javierre, *María de Luna*.

21. The queen wrote her will the night before she died. The three Franciscans were allotted 100 gold florins each for carrying out their responsibility as executors. ACA: CR, Reg. 2311, f. 139v (Valencia, 9 November 1407), ed. Ivars and Webster, "Franciscanismo,"123.

22. Agulló, "Fundación y dotación del convento," 125–55.

d'Agout—a Provençal noblewoman whose family held the Lordship of Sault—and Lope, Count of Luna (in Aragon) and Lord of Segorb (in Valencia), a favorite of King Pere the Ceremonious, and one of the wealthiest and most esteemed magnates of the kingdom. When Lope died in 1360, he left just two legitimate daughters, a toddler, Maria, and the posthumously born Brianda, as well as an illegitimate son, Ferran López de Luna. With Ferran ineligible to inherit, Maria became the principal heir of the Luna fortune, a circumstance that would quickly draw her into the royal family.[23] At this time, Pere the Ceremonious and Elionor of Sicily were looking for a wealthy heiress to marry to their second son, the *infant* Martí, and so their eyes naturally fell on Maria, whose tremendous estates could be pulled into the royal patrimony by means of such a marriage. Thus, Maria and Martí were betrothed in 1361, and shortly after, at age four, the young heiress was sent off to be raised in the court of Queen Elionor of Sicily. As a consequence, in a situation quite uncharacteristic for most medieval kings and queens, Martí and Maria spent their childhood together, growing up as near siblings, along with the other royal children: Joan, the heir; and the *infanta* Elionor, who would later be married to Juan I of Castile (1379–90). During much of the era of Maria's childhood and adolescence, Francesc Eiximenis, who had long been patronized by the royal family, was residing in the Franciscan convent of Barcelona while working on *Lo Crestià,* and would have been a frequent figure at court and in the lives of the royal children.

Unfortunately, we can say little about Maria's upbringing during those crucial years. Queen Elionor would have been in charge of Maria's education, and she surely became a model for her. Elionor herself was very active in politics during the whole period of her marriage to King Pere, who valued her greatly as a partner and adviser, and for whom she served as lieutenant.[24] In terms of formal education, Maria would have been brought up as a pious Christian, and trained in the activities considered befitting a young noblewoman of the highest standing, including writing, reading, music, embroidery, and riding. She would also have learned other, more practically oriented skills relating to the administration of her noble patrimony, and she was prepared at an early age to take direct control of her substantial and far-flung estates. Maria's native language would have been Aragonese, the tongue of her father's lineage and a cognate of Castilian, although she may also have known some Provençal or French, given her mother's origins. She almost certainly learned some Latin, the language of high culture

23. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 11–14.
24. Deibel, "La reyna."

and administration, although it had been largely displaced by this time by Catalan. And indeed, as soon as she moved to the royal court at age four, she adopted this language, which was the household vernacular of the royal family and court. Like other peninsular languages, Catalan already had a long pedigree as a literary language; hence, it was the preferred mode of literary expression for Eiximenis and his contemporaries, and had become the principal language of the royal chancery. It was the language in which most of Maria's voluminous correspondence as countess, duchess, and queen would be written, along with Latin and Aragonese.

In 1372 Maria and Martí were married; she was probably fourteen, and he a year older. As per the negotiations that led to their marriage, King Pere endowed his son Martí with substantial properties and titles in Aragon and Valencia, in the places where the Luna family was already strong, thereby buttressing the Luna fortune and consolidating Maria's position.[25] When Martí's brother, Joan, succeeded to the throne in 1387 Pere named him Duke of Montblanc. In the decades before they came to power Maria and Martí maintained an aristocratic court, but one that would have bifurcated when their itineraries took them each to separate places.[26] Their court was itinerant, and moved in an orbit that took in their main seigneurial possessions and those of the royal house, particularly Barcelona, Montblanc, Zaragoza, the city of Valencia, and Segorb. From the very beginning Maria acted as an independent seigneur and administered her own estates. She supervised collections of rents and the administration of justice, and attended to the whole gamut of lordly responsibilities. This provided a foundation for an independent network of patronage; Maria distributed gifts, annuities, and positions at court to family members, favorites, and clients, and disbursed substantial donations to clerics and religious institutions. In other words, she was an independent, powerful, and experienced seigneur.

During their long period as duke and duchess, Martí and Maria's most frequent residence was Segorb—Maria's principal property in the Kingdom of Valencia. Consequently, their paths intertwined not only with that of Francesc Eiximenis, who moved to Valencia in 1382, but with that of Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós and her family. As noted in the previous chapter, Sanxa's oldest son, Joan de Prades, married Joana de Cabrera in 1385, and this provided the opportunity for Sanxa to leave her husband, never to return. Joana de Cabrera had been living at Maria de Luna's court at the time because they were cousins and they had formed a close personal relationship. Maria

25. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 21–24.

26. After 1392, when Martí departed for Sicily, the two maintained separate courts.

acted as Joana's patroness and protector on many occasions, and when Joana was eventually widowed, Maria once more invited her, along with her two daughters, Margarida and Joana, to take up residence in her household.[27]

Over the course of these years Martí and Maria also had four children, but only their oldest one, Martí (later known as "the Young"), survived childhood. In 1392 Maria and Martí's lives took a decisive turn when they married their son to Maria of Sicily, who ruled over the island kingdom in her own right. Previously, Pere the Ceremonious had tried to convince his heir, Joan, to marry Maria (who was his niece), in order to reincorporate Sicily into the Crown of Aragon.[28] After Joan defied his father's wishes and married the French noblewoman Violant de Bar, Martí the Young came to be seen as the best possible option. As a consequence, the elder Martí would be absent from the Crown of Aragon for five years, from 1392 to 1397, during which time he fought alongside his son in order to force the reluctant Sicilians to recognize Martí the Young as their new king. Through all of this Maria de Luna stayed in the Crown of Aragon alone, attending not only to her own extensive patrimony, but also to that of her husband, both of which were scattered around the lands of Aragon, Catalonia, and Valencia. She not only managed these estates, but used them to generate the revenue and collateral required to fund the expensive and drawn-out Sicilian campaign. Maria, now the mother of a king, also used her influence at court and her network of clients to lobby Joan I for aid in the Sicilian wars.[29]

Key to the success of her petitions was the support of the Franciscans, particularly Pere Marí, the provincial master, who pressured the king and queen's confessors, who were members of the same order, to influence the royal couple to help Martí and the Sicilian cause.[30] During these years Maria dedicated almost all of her resources and energy to supporting her husband and son in Sicily, and this is probably why Eiximenis had not been immediately interested in writing a book for her or cultivating her as an ally. She was noble and rich, but at that time would have made him a poor patroness. As Martí's time in Sicily dragged on, Maria was forced to sell or pawn a good part of her patrimony, to the extent that the councillors of the city of Valencia, with whom Eiximenis was in close contact, formally noted in a meeting on 28 September 1396 that Maria, who had just been acclaimed in Barcelona as queen, "was suffering great need and distress."[31]

27. See chapter 2.
28. Ferrer i Mallol, "L'infant Martí," 217.
29. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 29–34.
30. Ibid., 31–34.
31. AMV: Manual de consells, Reg. A-21, f. 48r-v (Valencia, 28 September 1396).

Eiximenis's "Mirror of Princes"

It was at this point, when Maria was alone and vulnerable, running her own and her husband's considerable feudal patrimonies in the Crown of Aragon, that her relationship with Eiximenis deepened. The situation in Sicily was more complicated than either the duke or the duchess had anticipated, and the resistance of the Sicilians considerable. It was in the midst of this, on 15 July 1392, that Eiximenis wrote a long, confidential letter to Maria's husband, the *infant,* in his own hand.[32] This was meant to serve essentially as a sort of very abbreviated "mirror of princes" for him, and by extension for the couple's son—a fact that demonstrates, at the very least, Eiximenis's sense of confident familiarity with the couple, given that he would presume to offer such counsel to the prince. This letter—offering advice on how best to govern the new kingdom—was addressed to Martí, *pére,* and to Martí, *fils* (the actual king), because, as Eiximenis understood, it was really the father, and not the adolescent son (who was probably fourteen, and certainly no older than sixteen), who would be running things. And this letter, indeed, was the only text that Eiximenis ever wrote for Martí—the book the friar seems to have promised Martí never materialized.

In the course of this missive Eiximenis urged Martí to protect his only son and heir, the young Martí, now king of Sicily, and to surround himself and his son with fellow Catalan courtiers, rather than Sicilians—who were by nature untrustworthy, according to the friar. Moreover, Martí should be sure to find good counselors: virtuous clergymen who would give the young king proper advice, even when not asked to—just as Eiximenis himself was doing for the elder Martí in that very letter. Further, the friar advised the prince as to how the younger Martí should behave in his new kingdom: he ought to be clement and pious, to avoid being seen as severe, to always have a "happy face," but not laugh or talk too much, and to maintain a steady gaze.[33]

Eiximenis recommended that Martí the Younger maintain a clear sense of justice and avoid avarice, a mortal sin. He should be generous with his subjects in order to obtain their allegiance, be clement and pious, and show hospitality to foreigners. He should safeguard the community of his kingdom and the *cosa pública,* and not start any war without consulting his subjects. Finally, he should keep in mind that whatever he managed to accomplish in life was due to God's merit, and not his own. These were the general themes; other types of more specific advice dealt with practical

32. Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 2:399–403 (1392).
33. Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 2:401.

matters, such as not taking his court to lodge in monasteries, so as not to disturb the religious life of the house (here, echoing advice he had given to Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós).[34] At one point in the letter, Eiximenis said something that was both important and revealing, relating to how Martí should behave when he was seen in public: "I beseech Your Highness, that whatever Your sins and weaknesses may be, that they remain hidden from view."[35] Hiding one's defects is a very different matter from correcting them or avoiding them all together.

For Eiximenis it was most important for the prince to present an image of rectitude, so as to be loved and respected by his people. To better illustrate his ideas, the friar asked the elder Martí to order copies of his treatises, and to read them to find further examples of appropriate Christian doctrine. The specific books he recommended were *El regiment de la cosa pública* (written c. 1384 for the municipal councillors of the city of Valencia) and part of his *Dotzè* of *Lo Crestià* (which he had been working on since 1385, and was dedicated to Alfons de Villena, Martí the elder's cousin and Sanxa's brother-in-law). All of this advice is particularly interesting when compared to that which he gave to Maria de Luna in the *Scala Dei,* regarding what a queen ought to do, as we will see shortly.

In any case, the rest of the leading Franciscans in the Crown of Aragon seem to have had similar concerns regarding the two Martís. Pere Marí, the provincial master of the Franciscan order in Aragon (1397–1406), also wrote to Maria's husband while the latter was in Sicily, reminding "the Ecclesiastic" that his role there was to do battle, and that prayer should be left to the clergy. Apparently, the devotion of the prince was so fervent that it was seen by even these clerics as subverting the social order—in which the *oratores* were the ones who prayed, while the *bellatores* fought, and the *laboratores* worked. The elder Martí was spending too much time praying and not enough "princing."[36] Excessive religious devotion was seen as a shortcoming in a male ruler, although, as we will see as we turn to the *Scala Dei,* Eiximenis considered it quite appropriate for a queen.

Finally, another important matter treated in Eiximenis's letter related to the prince's patronage of the Franciscan order. In 1386 Martí had founded and endowed a monastery in Segorb in the Kingdom of Valencia: the charterhouse of the Vall de Crist (Valley of Christ). The Carthusians were the

34. See chapter 2.

35. Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 2:401.

36. See Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 2:335–36 (12 October [1393]), in which Pere Marí evokes Exodus 17:9–13.

most contemplative among contemporary orders, and as a result had attracted the *infant*'s patronage. In Eiximenis's opinion, however, Martí needed to "convert to Saint Francis"—which is to say, he ought to be patronizing the Franciscans, rather than other orders, with alms, protection, and influence. If he were willing to do so, the friar wrote, "we would be willing to sing and dance before Jesus Christ and Saint Francis, shouting out from the choir, 'Long live! Long live the Lord-Duke of Sicily!'"[37] It was this letter that planted the seed of the Franciscan Observant movement in the Crown of Aragon, a seed that would bear fruit with Maria de Luna's foundation of the Observant convent of Sancti Spiritus in Valencia in 1402. In their letters to Martí, both Eiximenis and Marí praised Maria de Luna for her loyal and capable conduct, and most specifically, for her efforts to raise capital at the court of Joan and Violant to send to Sicily in support of her husband and son.[38] Both friars would have known that word of their compliments would circle back to the duchess.

Maria de Luna, Queen and Lieutenant General

After the death of Joan I and with Martí in Sicily, it fell to Maria to rule in her husband's name as lieutenant general until his return in 1397.[39] It was an extremely difficult year, in which she faced opposition by two rival female claimants. The first was Violant de Bar, the dowager queen, who claimed to be bearing the posthumous heir of the deceased Joan I. The second was Joana, Joan's firstborn child of his earlier marriage to Matha d'Armagnac—who, along with her husband, Count Mathieu de Foix, launched an invasion of Catalonia and Aragon. As it happened, Joana, Violant, and Maria all knew Eiximenis personally, and all had his books in

37. Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 2:402. Pere Marí served as the tenth provincial master of the Franciscans in Aragon, from 1397 to 1415. See Hebrera y Esmir, *Crónica,* I:93; also Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 122–37.

38. For instance, in 1393 Pere Marí wrote: "The Lady-Duchess has made the greatest effort and is staying in Barcelona, petitioning the said Lord-King, and pressing him as much as she can regarding the said affair." Rubió i Lluch, *Documents,* 2:335. See Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 32–33.

39. The lieutenancy was a formal office created in the thirteenth century and defined by Aragonese law by which the king could fully delegate his authority to a third party, a sort of "alter ego," in order to be able to extend his physical presence by proxy. Typically, the post went to the eldest prince, but when there was no son, or he was too young, the queen would be the natural choice for this important position. See Lalinde Abadía, "Virreyes y lugartenientes"; Cardim and Palos, *El mundo de los virreyes;* Earenfight, "Without the Person"; Earenfight, *The King's Other Body;* and Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 5–7 and 40–43.

their libraries—but as far as we are aware, he took no formal position on the contest.[40]

Hence, it came about that in 1396 three women were disputing title over the Crown of Aragon, just as later on, in the mid-fifteenth century, two women—Isabel (later, "the Catholic") and her niece, Juana, known as La Beltraneja—would fight over the Crown of Castile. Of the three aspirants to the Catalano-Aragonese crown, Maria was most determined and best positioned to control the situation. She immediately had Violant placed in "protective custody," to be guarded around the clock by four reputable matrons, in order to confirm that she was not pregnant (and to prevent her from becoming so). Most remarkably, she also took up the role of commander in chief, and directed the military defense of her realms.[41] Hence, in *Lo somni,* Bernat Metge's protohumanistic masterpiece, the sycophantic functionary described her using two contrasting images. On the one hand, Maria was Penelope, ever faithful and patiently awaiting her husband's return from his Mediterranean odyssey; on the other, she was Fabius Maximus (d. 230 BCE), the Roman general who saved Rome from Hannibal's armies through a strategy of forbearance and restraint, and was named *Cunctator* (Delayer):

> Our men-at-arms say that you expelled [the Foix], meaning to say that you are another Fabius Maximus, who won more battles for Rome by not fighting than others won by battling the enemy. And know, Ye, for certain (and if I say it bluntly, know it is because such is my character, as you know better than I) that none other could have expelled them without the wisdom, industry, and good management of the said Lady, who did it by careful preparation—aided in this by our flag-ship city of Barcelona and [by] Aragon—which shocked them and gave them to flight, just as the lion to the stag and the griffon to the crane.[42]

When Martí at long last set foot in his new realms on 23 May 1397, Maria prepared a lavish entry and celebration to welcome her husband to Barcelona. Among the key invitees was none other than Francesc Eiximenis,

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40. They are either documented in their possession, as in the case of Joana de Foix and Maria, or documented in the possession of people of the entourage, such as their servants, as in the case of Violant de Bar. In any case, several royal functionaries working at the chancery owned copies of Eiximenis's works. See Hernando, "Obres de Francesc Eiximenis," 404, 411, and 431–32.

41. ACA: RP, Reg. 905, ff. 12v and 41v (7 August 1396) and ff. 41v–42r (12 January 1396). Silleras-Fernandez, "Widowhood and Deception," 187–96; Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 43–46.

42. Metge, *Lo somni,* IV:237.

whom she had asked to travel to the city to give the new king the reception he deserved.[43] With Martí's return, the role and influence of the Franciscan order in the Crown of Aragon would be entrenched and expand. The king transformed what to that point had been a sort of informal tradition into a rule of court to be observed in perpetuity. Most members of the royal family had customarily chosen Franciscans to serve as their confessors, but henceforth, they would be obliged to.[44] With the encouragement of his own confessor, the friar Joan de Tahust (1328–1427), Martí added this clause to the Protocols (*Ordinacions*) that his father, Pere the Ceremonious, had compiled in 1344 for the administration and ceremonial of the royal court.[45] This was not a minor triumph for the Franciscan order—it gave them profound access to the royal family, to their consciences, purses, and networks of influence.

With the return of the king from Sicily, Maria's political role did not end. Her career and political influence are further proof that medieval kingship and medieval rulership were not equivalent; ruling was not the exclusive competence of the monarch—kings ruled, but they depended on the help of their spouses and other family members. Maria remained Martí's most trusted adviser in virtually all of the important business of the realm, as their correspondence shows, and she also served him again as lieutenant of the Kingdom of Valencia, from December 1401 until her death in December 1406. Noble feuding was tearing the kingdom apart, and Maria was sent to restore order and to negotiate peace—mediation being seen traditionally as a role played by queens. As for Maria and Eiximenis, their relationship became closer as a consequence of Maria's service as lieutenant of the Kingdom in Valencia. Here, she appointed Eiximenis to her governing council, along with the cardenal of Valencia, the master of the order of Montesa, and the royal exchequer, Pere d'Artes, to the latter of whom Eiximenis dedicated the *Llibre dels àngels* and the *Vida de Jesucrist,* two of his most popular works.[46]

A Book for a Queen

It seems that Eiximenis began to compose the *Scala Dei* in his native Catalan (with some notes in Latin) in 1396 or 1397, shortly after Maria became queen, and while she was governing the realm on her own as lieutenant general. From the outset, the book proved influential: we have references to no

43. Riera, *Francesc Eiximenis,* 43, doc. 60 (Barcelona, 8 January 1397); Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 60–61.

44. ACA: CR, Reg. 2190, ff. 216v–218r (1 August 1398); see López, "Confesores de la familia real," 209–12.

45. Pere III el Cerimoniós, *Ordinacions de la casa,* ed. Gimenos et al.

46. See chapter 1; and Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 100.

less than eleven manuscripts from the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries—although just three have survived—and three early printed editions (1494, 1501, and 1523).[47] As Ivars discovered, it seems that Maria commanded two copies of the *Scala Dei* to be made for herself, evidenced by two orders in her fiscal registers for the production of a book of prayers: one in 1397, and another in 1404. One of those manuscripts, copied at the very beginning of the fifteenth century is now lost—all that remains is a photograph of the first page, and a description composed by Josep Massó i Torrents in 1909.[48] That exemplar was probably one of the copies the queen ordered for her own use, and as such was richer and more lavishly decorated than the others.

In this now-lost copy, Maria de Luna is depicted on the first page (fig. 2), in the illuminated capital *A* that begins the dedicatory incipit: "A la molt alta e molt excellent senyora, la senyora dona Maria, per la gràcia de Déu Regina de Aragó" (To the very high and very excellent Lady Maria, by the grace of God, Queen of Aragon). She appears sitting on a throne, richly garbed, and with a crown on her head, her monumental figure outsizing the other four in the tableau. These include three angels that frame the scene, and a diminutive, kneeling Eiximenis, who is poised offering her the book with all modesty, looking toward her with the same humility and sense of *captatio benevolentiae* that he exhorts her to present before God. Some floral and animal decoration around the margins completes the picture.[49] This miniature complements the dedication, making it even more explicit: a monumental queen is receiving a book as a present directly from its author. The paratext is no mere decoration; it is an important cue that prompts a specific configuration of the readers' perception and expectations regarding the work.

This specific copy of the book was written out over 154 leaves in quarto (reduced to about 126 in the early printed editions). The quarto (a folio folded in half twice) makes a good size for a manual meant to

47. The only medieval copies extant are the following: BNE: Ms. 92; BC: Ms. 88; and BUB: Ms. 1804. See a general inventory of Eiximenis's works in Puig i Oliver, "Catàleg dels manuscrits," 74 and 341–51. Despite its contemporary popularity, the *Scala Dei* has not yet been the subject of a modern critical edition—there is only a partial and modernized version edited by Wittlin (Eiximenis, *Scala Dei: Devocionari de la reina Maria*).

48. Ivars points out that the book given to Maria de Luna was not dated and did not carry a title, but believes it was the "prayer book" she paid to have illuminated in 1397 (see above). In 1404 the queen ordered the illumination of another book of prayers, this time by Pere Soler of Valencia. This is most likely the manuscript that was burned in 1944 in St. Petersburg (Hispanus Q-I-7), described by Massó i Torrents. See Ivars, "Franciscanismo," 262. Wittlin agrees with Ivars; see Wittlin, "De *Lo libre*."

49. This image can also be found on the cover of Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage* and p. 128.

Figure 2. Maria de Luna and Francesc Eiximenis on the opening page of *The Book of Queen Maria* (*Scala Dei*) from a now lost manuscript from the late fourteenth–early fifteenth century. BC: Cl. D 1916, inf. 4639. Copyright © Biblioteca de Catalunya, Barcelona.

be easy to carry and to travel with, and comfortable to read and use as a prayer book. In the prologue and the conclusion, the author claims to have written the work at the request of the queen herself. The product itself is for the most part a fairly run-of-the-mill breviary peppered with many extracts from Eiximenis's respected *Llibre de les dones.* But, unlike the *Llibre,* the aim of which was to teach women how to be better Christians (in a very Franciscan way) by identifying their natural defects and demonstrating how to overcome them through a more perfect model of contemplation, the *Scala Dei* was also a vehicle for promoting Eiximenis's model of queenship.

The book that Eiximenis wrote for Maria de Luna had no formal title other than *El llibre de la reina Maria* (*The Book of Queen Maria*), a fact that shows the extent to which the book was conceived for the person to whom it was presented. The prayers it includes may have been rather generic, but the advice and the lessons that punctuate it were intended specifically for her. Normally, Eiximenis gave his books rather descriptive titles that were subsequently expanded on in the prologue. In this case, however, he portrayed the book very simply as a gift to the queen: nothing more than a little devotional manual or prayer book. It was later, when it was copied and reedited, and when it appears in library inventories, that it received different designations—titles that allow us to understand how it came to be perceived by its audience in the period after it was written.

The most durable title given to the book, *Scala Dei*—an ascetic title appropriate to the balance of its content—seems to have been attached to it for the first time in a manuscript of 1444, the oldest copy preserved.[50] Titles are an important part of the paratext of a book because they shape the prospective reader's understanding of the work, which here is presented as a treatise on mysticism. As Gérard Genette sees it, a paratext is a "threshold" (*seuils*), "a privileged place of pragmatics and a strategy, of an influence on the public, an influence that . . . is at the service of a better reception for the text and a more pertinent reading of it."[51] The scribe who gave it that title was probably thinking of the dream of Jacob (Genesis 28:10–12), or perhaps the *Scala Paradisi,* a work composed in Greek by the monk Joan Climacus, or "Scolasticus" (570–649), whose ideas became increasingly popular in Europe from the fifteenth to the

50. For example, Ms. 92 has the title *Scala Dei*. BNE: Ms. 92, f. 2r. See also Ivars, "Franciscanismo," 266; Massó i Torrents, "Inventari," 647.

51. Genette, *Paratexts,* 2.

seventeenth century, and which resonated with the intense spiritualism of the *devotio moderna,* and the Protestant and Catholic Reformations. Climacus's *Scala,* based also on Jacob's vision, prescribed a plan for personal enlightenment based on the soul's step-by-step ascent toward God through control of the body and the renunciation of the material and physical world—an approach consonant with Eiximenis's ideas. But there were other important references to ladders in medieval theology, not the least the very influential *Consolatio philosophiae* (*Consolation of Philosophy;* 524) by Boethius, which presented Lady Philosophy as having the image of a ladder (*scala*) on her gown. This *scala* connected the Greek letters pi (associated with practical knowledge), at the bottom, to theta, the first letter of *Θεός* (*theos*), the Greek word for "God" (representing contemplative/theoretical knowledge), at the top. In addition, Ramon Llull, the renowned thirteenth-century rational philosopher, mystic, and Franciscan tertiary from Mallorca—who, like Eiximenis, wrote in Catalan and Latin—made use of the metaphor of the ladder. In his *Liber de ascensu et descensu intellectus* (*Book of the Ascent and Descent of the Mind;* 1304) Llull evokes the image of a contemplative ascent from practical knowledge and the sensory world to that of the intangible and immaterial, and from there, to the intellectual and divine.

Returning to Eiximenis's work, *Scala Dei* was also the title given to his *Llibre de la reina Maria* in all of its printed editions, beginning with those published in Barcelona in 1494 and 1501, through to the linguistically "modernized" version of 1523 (from "Lemosí" to Valencian).[52] Another paratextual element that reconceptualizes the work is the image on the cover. In later editions the illustration of the queen was replaced by that of a monk climbing a ladder toward God, who appears above, surrounded by angels (fig. 3). The fact that *The Book of Queen Maria* could be so easily reshaped in later editions from what was written as a devotional advocating for "holy queenship" into a book better suited for an ascetic or mystic shows to what extent Eiximenis was endeavoring to push Maria de Luna in that direction.

That said, the *Scala Dei* was also known as the *Tractat de la contemplació* (*Treatise on Contemplation*), after one of its sections—one that was taken

52. The second oldest surviving manuscript of the *Scala Dei,* also from the fifteenth century, belonged to the library of the Catalan Carthusian monastery of Scala Dei. A note at the beginning of the text notes that Antoni Sala gave it as a present to his son, who was a monk of that house. See Massó i Torrents, "Inventari," 646–48. Regarding the "Lemosí" version, see below.

Libre intitulat scala dei: ordenat per lo Reuerent mestre Francesch Eximenes: mestre en sacra theologia ōl orde ōls frares menors. Nouamēt traduit de Lemosi en nostra lengua vulgar Valēciana vtil y molt profitos pera contemplar les coses diuines:

Del convento de San Joseph de Barcelona

Figure 3. The opening page of an early print edition of *Scala Dei* (Barcelona: Dimas Belestar y Joan Giglo, 1523). BC: 11-VI-8. Copyright © Biblioteca de Catalunya, Barcelona.

directly from the *Llibre de les dones.*[53] This only confuses matters, given that the "Treatise on Contemplation" of the *Llibre de les dones* was also sometimes copied and circulated separately, and gained considerable popularity as an inspirational text among important figures of the time. For instance, Garcia Jiménez de Cisneros, abbot of Montserrat, and cousin of the famous cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros (1436–1517), confessor to Isabel the Catholic, depended on this text to compose his *Exercitatorio de la vida spiritual* (*Exercises for a Spiritual Life*)—as will be discussed in the next chapter. Further, another excerpt of the *Llibre de les dones* circulated independently from 1497 on under the similar-sounding title *Tractat de la confessió* (*Treatise on Confession*).[54]

In another instance, the *Scala Dei* was referred to as *Contemplació de la Reyna* (*Contemplation of the Queen*), or so it appears in the inventory of the books of Pedro, constable of Portugal (c. 1429–66), who during a brief interlude pretended to the title "King of the Catalans," and who was himself a writer, and deeply invested in literary culture.[55] This is actually the most accurate of the book's many rubrics, given that it correctly reflects the objective of the text: to teach the art of contemplation to a queen, and to orient her actions, activities, and patronage toward the church and the Franciscans. Another rather revealing iteration of the title is one mentioned in the 1458 inventory of the library of Maria of Castile (queen of Aragon, r. 1416–58), in which it appears simply as *Llibre de Dona Maria Reyna d'Aragó* (*Book of Lady Maria, Queen of Aragon*).[56] Its presence in this catalog confirms that the *Scala Dei* continued to be owned, and probably read,

53. This is the title borne by the manuscript preserved at the Biblioteca Nacional (Madrid). Maria of Castile (queen of the Crown of Aragon, 1416–58) ordered a copy of the book and referred to it by this name also, or so it appears in the inventory of her books made in Valencia in 1458. See Ivars, "Franciscanismo," 267; Massó i Torrents, "Les obres de Fra Francesc Eiximenis," 649. Maria of Castile was very interested in literature related to the *Devotio moderna;* for example, she asked the abbot of Scala Dei to send her a copy of Ludolf of Saxony's *Meditationes Vitae Christi* (*Meditations on the Life of Christ*). She too was a supporter of the Observant Franciscans, and founded the Observant Clarissan convent, La Trinidad, in Valencia. See Soldevila, "La Reyna Maria," 308 and 316.

54. Ivars, "Franciscanismo," 269; Ivars, "Cuestionario bibliográfico," 251–55.

55. Pedro was named constable of Portugal in 1443, but in 1449 was exiled to Castile by Afonso V of Portugal (1477–81). While in Castile he kicked off his literary career by writing the *Sátira de felice e infelice vida* (*Satire of the Happy and Unhappy Life;* c. 1445). He wrote it in Portuguese, and then translated it into Castilian because "coming to these parts [Castile] I turned to this language more out of the constraints of necessity than of choice." In 1463 Catalan rebels offered to recognize him as their king during their resistance to their ruler, Joan II. Joan, Fernando the Catholic's father, was king of the Crown of Aragon (1458–97), and king consort of Navarre (1425–79). See Balaguer Merino, *Don Pedro,* 8–12; see also chapters 4 and 5 below.

56. Maria de Castilla also owned a copy of the *Llibre de les dones;* see Ivars, "Franciscanismo," 426.

by Aragonese queens. Finally, the work can be found in the inventory of the library of the royal monastery of Santa Maria de Poblet, a collection founded by Pere the Ceremonious, who not only donated his own books, but made the monastery the pantheon of the Catalan dynasty. Here, the *Scala Dei* was simply called *Doctrinal* (*On Doctrine*).[57] The fact that Eiximenis himself did not give any other title to the book other than *The Book of Queen Maria* is a clear indication that it was not intended, in principle, for general distribution. It was only when its readership broadened in the fifteenth century that it was redefined and repackaged with a new title, for new audiences.

Considering the various titles given to the book can help us to understand how contemporaries approached and read the text. For example, the titles *Scala Dei* and *Tractat de la contemplació* focus on piety and religion, while *Contemplació de la reina* and *Libre de la reina Maria* pull the patroness, the queen, into the center. Although neither became the standard title of the work, it is these latter two that I will focus on, as they emphasize the centrality of the queen. This is important, because if one reads the *Scala Dei* purely in the context of its devotional content, one misses the complexity of the work, and loses sight of the author's objectives, which were to move beyond the established models of queenly virtue, and ultimately to transform Maria de Luna—or at least her public image—into the figure of a model Franciscan queen. In any event, the existence of variant titles for a given work was common in the Middle Ages; indeed, many of the texts of the medieval Castilian canon were referred to by various titles, particularly in the early modern period and in the nineteenth century, as the academic discipline of philology developed. For example, the works we now refer to as *Libro de buen amor,* by Juan Ruiz, archpriest of Hita (c. 1330), *El corbacho,* by Alfonso Martínez de Toledo, archiprest of Talavera (1438), and *La celestina,* by Fernando Rojas (1499), had been given different titles by their authors—namely, *El libro del arcipreste de Hita, El libro del arcipreste de Talavera,* and the *Comedia de Calisto y Melibea,* or *Tragicomedia,* respectively.[58] In the present study, Eiximenis's book is referred to as the *Scala Dei,* rather than

57. Ivars, "Franciscanismo," 267.

58. It was Ramón Menéndez Pidal who gave the title *Libro de buen amor* to the work of the archpriest of Hita, basing his choice on the content of the *coplas* 18, 66, 68, 932–33, and 1630. See Arcipreste de Hita, *Libro de buen amor,* xlix–lviii. Similarly, the untitled work written in 1438 by Alfonso Martínez de Toledo, archpriest of Talavera, has been known since 1498 as *Corbacho* with the subtitle *Reprobación del amor mundano* (*A Reproach against Worldly Love*) because of its supposed similarities to Boccaccio's volume of the same title. In 1499, Fernando de Rojas wrote the *Comedia de Calisto y Melibea* (*Comedy of Calisto and Melibea*), which he subsequently changed to the *Tragicomedia de Calisto y Melibea* (*Tragicomedia of Calisto and Melibea*) in his modified edition of 1500–1502. The popular title,

the *Llibre de la Reina Maria,* not because it is the most appropriate title, but merely because it has been established as the standard, both in the eyes of scholars and in the catalogs of the manuscripts and incunabula collections where the book is found.

Devotional Literature and the *Scala Dei*

In the Middle Ages literate women were expected to read devotional literature. Even Christine de Pizan (d. c. 1430) in her *Trésor de la cité des dames* (*Treasure of the City of Ladies;* 1405) recommended that young princesses read "books of devotion and contemplation or ones dealing with good behavior," instead of texts that contained "vain things, follies or dissipation."[59] Hence, with its devotional dimension and its practical use as a guide for prayer and pious meditation, the *Scala Dei* was an appropriate gift for a woman of high standing, much in the same way as a Book of Hours would be. In the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries the Book of Hours became commonplace, replacing the Psalter, as the choice for private devotional work for women to own and use in their prayers. The Hours were organized around the Little Office of the Blessed Virgin Mary, an array of eight services to be said at set times, day and night. These services had names that corresponded to the liturgical offices celebrated by the clergy, including monks and nuns (e.g., Matins, Lauds, Prime, Terce, etc.), but were shorter and included also psalms, readings, and hymns. In addition, Books of Hours typically included a calendar featuring the major saints' days and important holidays, and the liturgy for the Office of the Dead, as well as the seven penitential psalms, and specific prayers and exercises tailored to their particular recipient. The idea was to provide well-to-do laypeople with a means of practicing something resembling monastic religious observation. Some devotionals were written in Latin, and others in the vernacular, and the richest ones included elaborate miniatures, which converted the books—rather ironically—into objects of ostentation and display, rather than piety and humility.[60] Therefore, instead of a Book of Hours per se, Maria de Luna received from Eiximenis a much more customized text that

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by which his work is known—*La Celestina*—is a late editorial addition; inserted to switch the readers' attention from the lovers, Calisto and Melibea, to their immoral go-between, Celestina.

59. Krueguer, "Introduction," xx.

60. Ward, *Women,* 143; Backhouse, *Books of Hours;* Bossy, "Christian Life," 139–40. Perhaps the best-known example of this is the *Très riche heures du Duc de Berry,* a richly illuminated Book of Hours (1413–16), commissioned by Jean de France, Duke of Berry. See Longnon, *Tres riche heures.*

packaged religion and queenship together, and which could also serve as a daily prayer manual.

With all of this praying going on, the distinction between the ideal activities of laywomen and nuns became somewhat blurry. But a chief difference was that women living outside the cloister had other nonreligious, worldly, and carnal responsibilities to attend to, such as raising children, if they had them, running their household, and, of course, devoting attention, both physical and emotional, to their husbands. Thus, for married women with children, the contemplative life remained an ideal that may have been aspired to, but could never be realized. Nevertheless, Eiximenis and other clerical moralists strenuously advocated for all women to strive toward this goal.

As for Eiximenis, he divided this devotional compendium into two main parts (see table 2). The first, shorter section features new material, written specifically for Maria (but including a section that was a summary of chapters 101–253 of the *Llibre de les dones*). The second part of the book comprised two treatises: one on penance, and the other on contemplation. These were also taken from the *Llibre de les dones,* but in this case, they were simply copied verbatim.[61]

The content and arrangement of the *Scala Dei* have been a source of some surprise for modern scholars. In 1933, for instance, Andrés Ivars, himself a Franciscan, ventured that only the first part was in fact "appropriate" for a woman who was a queen.[62] This is correct, in the sense that Eiximenis wrote a text meant to guide the reader toward achieving a mystical union with God, and this does not seem to be particularly well suited to a woman whose life revolved around the court of her husband, the perpetuation of his line, and the government of her terrestrial kingdoms and subjects. But Maria was not a typical queen. By the time she reached the throne, she was already a mature woman, and—being in her forties—past the age of childbearing. Hence, Eiximenis would have seen in her the opportunity to create a "holy queen," whose religious devotion would not be undermined by the carnal demands of her position as royal wife.[63] Hence, some sections of the first part and the whole second part of the *Scala Dei* is written as if for someone who was devoted to religion, such as a nun or tertiary, and who had the luxury or

61. Eiximenis, *Scala Dei,* ed. Wittlin, 93.

62. Ivars, "Franciscanimo," 419.

63. In his *Dotzè,* Eiximenis expounds on the proper treatment of a wife: "In the beginning, no husband should grant his wife all possible freedoms, for, if he later opts to impose restrictions upon her, he shall always find her disquieted. Consequently, it is better if he can continually extend her liberty, and every small concession he makes to her she will take to be a major favor." Eiximenis, *Dotzè,* 539; Renedo and Guixeras, *Anthology,* 94.

Table 2. The Structure of the *Scala Dei*

***Dedication** to Maria de Luna

Part One [Guide to contemplative exercises]

- ***First Contemplation:** The Seven Benefices Given to God by Humanity[1]
  - Creation from Nothing
  - Baptism
  - How God Governs Us[2]
  - Redemption
  - Penance
  - Preservation from Evil
  - The Promise of Salvation in the Celestial Kingdom
- **Second Contemplation:** How to Prepare for Death [from f. 12]
  - *Some Reflections on the Seven Deadly Sins
  - *The Importance of Following the Ten Commandments[3]
  - *Several Prayers and Litanies[4]
  - †Theological Virtues: Faith (12 Article of Faith, the Creed), Hope, and Charity [ff. 22v–24v]
  - †Cardinal Virtues: Prudence, Temperance, Fortitude, Justice [ff. 24v–27v]
  - †Treatise on the Ten Commandments [ff. 27v–31v]
  - †Treatise on the Seven Deadly Sins [with examples, ff. 31v–37v]: Lust,[5] Gluttony, Greed, Sloth, Wrath, Envy, and Pride
  - †Sins against the Holy Spirit [ff. 37v–38v]
    - Malicious Impunement of Manifest Truth
    - Envy of Spiritual Benefit
    - Obstinacy in Sin
    - Neglect of Penance
    - Hope for Undeserved Salvation
    - Lack of Hope
    - When One Is Free of Mortal Sin (Fasting, Almsgiving, and Prayer)

‡Part Two

- **Treatise on Penance** [ff. 39r–74r]
  - Contrition
  - Confession[6]
  - Satisfaction (Fasting, Alms, Prayer)
- **Treatise on Contemplation** [ff. 74r–98r]
  - Three Stages in Achieving Union with God, Each More Perfect Than the Previous
    - Purgative [ff. 75v–79r]
    - Illuminative [ff. 79r–90v]
    - Unitive [ff. 90v–98r]
- How to Meditate to Defeat Temptation [ff. 98r–102r]

Conclusion: Eiximenis Addresses Maria de Luna [f. 102r]

* = Original sections written for Maria de Luna

† = Summaries of chapters 101–253 of the *Llibre de les dones*

‡ = Taken verbatim from the *Llibre de les dones*

[1] Includes orations and litanies.

[2] Includes the section on Sanxa/Constança de Mallorca.

[3] Includes the example of the king of Babylon and his daughter, the queen of Poland, f. 14v.

[4] Including one in Latin recounting the life of Jesus Christ, f. 21r–v

[5] Here he explains the differences between adultery, fornication, incest, and sodomy.

[6] The section is very detailed and gives examples of how to confess for all sorts of sins.

the opportunity to strive for the spiritual life, particularly through meditation and mysticism. Just as the body needs to be trained to work properly, so does the soul, although by means of meditative rather than physical exercises. Thus, the "Treatise on Contemplation" in the final part of the book lays out three stages in achieving sanctity: the purgative (or purificational), the illuminative, and the uniate (or perfective), which together aim to establish the harmony of the individual soul and the divine. Those who successfully complete these three stages achieve a mystical communion with God, whereas those who achieve only the first two stages qualify only as mere ascetics. These ideals and approaches would resonate strongly with those of the *Devotio moderna,* which was coalescing in what is now the Netherlands, and would flourish in the fifteenth century. This ascetic movement promoted an intense personal relationship with God, attained through the practice of pious exercises—including more methodical praying and a striving for "self-projection" into the imagery of biblical scenes as a means of approaching the essence and experience of Christ.

The readers for whom these essays were composed were those of the *Llibre de les dones* (from which the treatise was lifted): Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, and the Clarissan nuns of the convent in Valencia. In other words, these were women who were positioned to strive for a very personal and direct connection with God, and thus enjoyed a situation of particular and rare privilege. The text was intended to provide them with the necessary instruction and direction to "climb the ladder"—instruction and direction that necessarily came from a male religious authority. As Luce Irigaray put it, "Mystic experience [thereby allowed] femininity to discover itself precisely through the deepest acceptance of patriarchal subjection."[64]

As far as Eiximenis was concerned, Maria, queen though she may have been, was in a similar position to Sanxa Ximenis and the Clares vis-à-vis her potential for attaining religious perfection—she just needed to be convinced of the fact. Hence, the first part of the *Scala Dei* starts with a dedicatory preamble, in which Eiximenis notes that he has written the book at Maria's request, to attend and arrange her spiritual life, so that she may avoid giving offense to God. Subsequently, the first chapter focuses on orienting the queen toward devotional practice, by outlining in general terms what she should be "thinking about" regularly.[65] This is arguably the most interesting part of the book as regards queenship, as it is here that Eiximenis most deliberately sets out to shape her approach to monarchy. He effectively dresses up the practical in the habit of religion, offering a series of exhortations,

64. Moi, *Sexual/Textual Politics,* 137; Irigaray, "La Mystérique,"191–203.
65. BNE: Ms. 92 (*Scala Dei*), f. 1.

illustrated by historical examples of virtuous queens, and interspersed with contemplative digressions intended to bridge his worldly and celestial advice, and lend divine authority to his quite down-to-earth opinions on how a queen ought to behave.

Curiously, in his effort to inculcate Maria with an ever greater sense of piety, he emphasizes prayer not as a public activity to be undertaken in order to reinforce her image before her subjects, but, instead, as deeply private and personal. Echoing the Gospel of Matthew, he directs the queen (like all good believers) to pray alone, at night, unseen and undisturbed.[66] In his prescription, "The proper place [to pray] is one's chamber, or secret chapel, or in church. Most commonly among royalty a little house is set aside where they can go secretly to pray. The second point is that when the queen has the opportunity to go to such a place, she should close the door and isolate herself from any other people, and she should kneel and raise her hands and eyes up to adore our Lord God in this manner."[67] But this approach resonates with what Peter Burke referred to as the "culture of sincerity" that emerged out of the *devotio,* and would characterize the rise of Protestantism in the sixteenth century, a time when women aimed to use their devotional reading in the domestic environment to meditate and achieve closeness with God.[68] Eiximenis represents an earlier iteration of this impulse; his emphasis on the importance of prayer, meditation, and reflection on the idea of death is a characteristic of the Observant Franciscans.[69]

In the *Scala Dei* Eiximenis explains not only exactly *what* Maria should say—and in some cases he provides the exact text of the prayers—but also *how* she should say it. It was his view that the performative aspects of oration could contribute to a greater understanding of the whole devotional process, and thereby have a deepening effect on prayer. Thus, the queen is to pray with humility, to kiss the ground before the image of Christ, to kneel, and to look at him with humility and reverence. Praying alone in a private room or chapel, at night or early in the morning, served not only to underline the

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66. "But when you pray, go into your room, close the door and pray to your Father, who is unseen. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you." Matthew 6:6.

67. BNE: Ms. 92, f. 6v.

68. Burke, *The Fortunes of the Courtier,* 113

69. The Observants promoted popular devotion, meditation, and intense spirituality. They encouraged the employment of spiritual exercises, such as nocturnal prayer and contemplation, which was particularly emphasized by Italian Observants, such as Jacques de Bitetto (d. 1490) and Vicent d'Aquilia (d. 1504). Thomas de Florence (d. 1420), of the convent of Scarlino (Tuscany), recommended that the faithful not go back to bed after Matins (the morning prayer), but rather to meditate for the rest of the night. Paul the Teotonic of the convent of Capriola (close to Siena) asked young novices to meditate on death for a full week. See Roncière, "Identités franciscaines," 41.

humility and authenticity of devotion, but quite simply to ensure that she would not be interrupted. All of this is to some extent characteristic of late medieval devotional texts. For example, a late fourteenth-century French manual, contemporary with the *Scala Dei,* instructed, "You shall retire into your room as soon as possible and you shall close the door behind you; and you must do so spiritually as well, that is, you must withdraw . . . and you must close the *door* of your conscience and place yourself in the presence of your Creator."[70] Eiximenis wanted Maria to experience much more than the act of praying; this was an exercise in contemplation that had an ascetic dimension, intended to allow her to fully connect with God—and through him to his church, and through his church to the Franciscans, and through the Franciscans to Eiximenis, the friar who showed her the way—as he reveals over the course of the book.

In Eiximenis's view, it was meditation that gave efficacy to prayer, and in order for meditation to achieve this, it was necessary for the supplicant to undergo a program of penance focusing on three specific approaches: fasting, alms, and prayer.[71] And, indeed, Maria de Luna did practice fasting before the more important religious holidays of the liturgical calendar, and made sure that she ate fish when required, rather than meat.[72] We know this because her household registers record the food bought and consumed by her court on daily basis.[73] As for alms, she always donated generous quantities of money to the church and to poor people, both *vergonzantes* and *miserables,* sometimes personally but most frequently through her almsgiver (*almoiner*), a chaplain who was in charge of her donations.[74] This too is documented in her account books.

Interestingly enough, Eiximenis's advice to Maria was compatible with the recommendations of her father-in-law, King Pere the Ceremonious, although their aims were quite distinct. Pere's *Ordinacions* (*Protocols;* 1344) included an outline of the king's pious exercises. But, for Pere, religious devotion was a matter of highly choreographed public display revolving around

70. Clark, "Constructing the Female Subject," 172. Emphasis added.

71. He writes, "Penance is a virtue steeped in the Flesh, afflicting it such that it may yield on those points that are necessary to us to save our souls." Then he adds, "It is nothing less than the nature of women to neither eat nor drink excessively, thanks to which to abstain or fast does not imply great suffering for them." The exception is the "evil woman" (*mala fembra*). BNE: Ms. 92, ff. 39r–40v.

72. In contrast, for example, King Alfonso the Magnanimous is documented eating meat during Lent. See Altisent, *L'almoina reial,* xliii.

73. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 119–22.

74. *Miserables* (miserable poor) were people who clearly looked poor and desperate, while *vergonzantes* (shameful poor) were in a situation of need, relative to their station in life, but not poor to outward appearances. See Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 130–32.

the royal chapel and the priest who presided over it, and was intended as a public and political exercise rather than a private and devotional one. True, the king laid out how the various religious holidays were to be celebrated, including the decoration of the chapel, the number of priests in charge, and the pious donations and alms to be distributed, but the emphasis was on the display of pious majesty, not on his own personal edification. But we can see from Pere's household account books that he did not even follow his own dictates relating to almsgiving and pious ritual during Holy Week, and in view of this, one can hardly assume that he faithfully followed the other ordinances relating to his chapel.[75]

The *Scala Dei* as a Franciscan Model of Holy Queenship

Thus, leaving aside the prefatory and concluding sections, the *Scala Dei* may appear to be little more than a garden-variety devotional treatise. However, when one connects the editorializations, the reflections on the divinely ordained social order and on the nature of women, and the specific recommendations and advice to Maria that pepper the various treatises, the book emerges as a subtly crafted "mirror of princesses," or essay on queenship. For example, according to Eiximenis, the third blessing that God conceded to humanity is the fact that people belong to different classes and vocations. Some are clerics, others laymen, some are lords, others vassals, some are rich, others poor, some are educated, others illiterate, some are handsome, others ugly, and so on. With this series of binary opposites, he justifies the contemporary sociopolitical order, as reflected in the tripartite division of society proposed by Adalbert of Laon and Gerard of Cambrai in the early eleventh century: the array of three *ordines* (orders) that set the nobility (*bellatores,* or "those who fight") and the clergy (*oratores,* or "those who pray") apart from commoners (*laboratores,* or "those who work"). Within this order, Maria and Martí are presented by Eiximenis as having been chosen by God to rule, and therefore, they bore a responsibility to do so in accordance with God's principles. In other words, with great power comes great responsibility, and that responsibility is owed both to God and to one's subjects.[76] This, of course, was very much in the traditional clerical view of kingship, which stressed that

75. Altisent, *L'almoina reial,* xlii.

76. Don Juan Manuel (1282–1348), a Castilian nobleman and prolific author (known widely for his frame tale, *El Conde Lucanor*), took a similar view of kingship and royal salvation in his *Libro de los estados* (*Book of the Estates*). See Don Juan Manuel, *Libro de los estados.*

every ruler owes everything he has and everything he is to God—and that the church is the representative of God.[77]

For example, for Eiximenis it befell the "lord" (he prefers the generic term *senyor* to the gender-specific "king" or "queen") to maintain the peace among his or her subjects, eschew armed conflict, and rule according to a principle of universal justice. Eiximenis describes the *senyor*'s role using the metaphors of Saint Jerome: a lord should not be like "a killing wolf" (*llop exterminador*) to his sheep (*ovelles*). Rather, he ought to ensure that their lambs have sufficient pasture, not only with the aim of having them produce more wool, but for its own sake. The ruler who genuinely advocates for the prosperity of his or her subjects, not merely as an end, but as a means, is virtuous and will prosper; by contrast, those who do not will find—according to Eiximenis—that sickness, poverty, and misery are their destiny, that their enemies will multiply, and their lineage will fail. Moreover, such consequences were not reserved for this life alone, and Eiximenis continues, "Saint Ambrose says that the most severe punishments of Hell are reserved for some rulers, and the greatest joys of Paradise for good rulers, both on Earth, and after, in Heaven."[78]

Given all this, the friar stresses, princes cannot be lazy or negligent; rather, they should be thinking of governing night and day. And given the nature, complexity, and importance of the task before them, rulers need to be sure they are surrounded by good advisers—individuals who are not too young and who enjoy the benefit of years, who are wise, who are not avaricious, who are "middle class" (*d'estament mitjà;* which is to say, honorable knights and citizens), who fear God, and love the prince and the land, and who are willing to speak frankly to him regarding his politics and comportment (although always with reverence and respect). In other words, the virtuous and responsible prince needs a royal adviser just like Francesc Eiximenis—a man drawn from the propertied bourgeoisie (*ciutadans honrats*), who went on to become a God-fearing friar, who was thirty years Martí and Maria's senior, and who did not hesitate to speak frankly to Martí regarding his role in Sicily, or now to Maria, through the medium of this devotional manual he had composed for the new queen.

According to Eiximenis in the *Scala Dei,* the roles of the king and queen are distinct, and he certainly does not propose corulership; he constructs each

77. For instance, John of Salisbury's (c. 1115–80) highly regarded *Policraticus* addressed this topic, while discussing monarchy, the notion of virtue, and ethical and political life. He charges the prince with four main responsibilities: to revere God, to love his subjects, to have self-discipline, and to educate his officials. See *Policraticus,* V 3 n. 68.

78. BNE: Ms. 92, f. 9r–v.

around the binary categories of male and female, each of which has specific attributes that determine his or her position and role in society. At the same time, he acknowledges that gender is not strictly physical, but he anticipates and concurs with Judith Butler in considering gender identity performative, and that one can cross from one gender to the other as a consequence of one's acts (repeated performances). Eiximenis, in the line of Butler in *Gender Trouble,* was aware of the fact that it was possible to destabilize gender roles and the hierarchies associated with them by performing those roles in manners that challenged the system, and felt anxious about it. In other words, he knew that gender is performative, but preferred and championed a binary model in which males were in charge. Thus, Eiximenis declares, one of the greatest boons that God can bestow on a monarch is a devout wife, who does not interfere in the affairs of the kingdom, who is not overproud, and who, through her acts, seeks only the honor and the well-being of her husband and his subjects.

And so Eiximenis comes to outline his vision of a perfect queen—a monarch who is pious, virtuous, and lives an orderly life, and whose role is, at bottom, secondary: to use her influence to steer her husband, the king, to reject all vice and embrace right and reason.[79] The idea that women should occupy at best a secondary place in government was not precisely novel, and would be repeated in the century to follow. As we will see in the next chapter, for example, Martín de Córdoba would give the same advice in his *Jardín de nobles doncellas* (*Garden of Noble Maidens*), a book he wrote to prepare Isabel the Catholic for her future role as queen. Eiximenis does not, however, advocate passivity; he recognizes that men allow themselves to be influenced by those they love—particularly their wives—and this gave an urgency and importance to defining the proper role of the queen. If a queen's calling was to steer her husband toward virtue, then it was all the more important that she be inculcated with the virtues of piety and devotion—this would be most acceptable not only to God, but to society.

What distinguishes the *Scala Dei* from works like the *Jardín,* written for young, future queens, is that Eiximenis presented his work to Maria de Luna when she was already queen. Moreover, she was not only queen, but was serving as lieutenant general of the Crown of Aragon, bearing plenipotentiary powers, speaking as the monarch to the *corts* (parliaments), and actively organizing the military defense of the realm. Nor was she the first queen of the Crown to do so—five others had acted in a similar capacity since the

79. BNE: Ms. 92, f. 9v.

beginning of the fourteenth century.[80] The *Scala Dei,* therefore, signals Eiximenis's disapproval, or at least his discomfort, with the role Maria had taken on. Justified as it may have been by the circumstances of her accession, it was an offense to the ordained order and, therefore, dangerous. For Eiximenis it was urgent that the king return and personally assume royal authority, and that Maria return to the secondary and private role of a wife. Once this situation had been restored, and if the queen were to behave as Eiximenis believed was appropriate for her station and gender, she would be loved by God, her husband, and her people, and this would bring good fortune to the realm. This was the only circumstance in which the queen could be truly loved—"love" here being understood as deriving from social acceptability and good reputation. Without good reputation a queen could not function at court as she should: as an intercessor for her subjects, and as a political adviser, and as a model of virtue for her husband and king, and for her subjects.[81]

Maria de Luna as a New Sanxa of Mallorca

This represents the central thesis of Eiximenis's vision of queenship, and in order to reinforce and illustrate such an important principle, he drew on an example from recent history that is vital to understanding how he intended to model Maria de Luna as queen, and that frames the rest of the book, including its devotional content. This example illustrates the third benefit that in Eiximenis's view God bestows on humanity, and is part of the "First Contemplation" (first part of the book, composed expressly for Maria de Luna). Here, he emphasizes that the queen is expected to be thinking about the nature of her position as wife constantly, and for Eiximenis, this means endeavoring to be the perfect companion and complement to her husband, the king:

> Thus, Saint Cyril, speaking about the second Psalm, says that among the notable boons that God gives to secular rulers in this life, is a God-fearing woman, who does not presume to rule, nor is proud, but rather strives in the honor and profit of her husband and the people: because such a woman, by her strong devotion and good life, may better than any other distance him from vice, and turn him to reason. Because,

80. There had been five queen-lieutenants before Maria de Luna, and there would be ten more after (including queens and princesses) through the sixteenth century. See Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 5–7; Beauchamp, "Les lieutenants généraux," 45–64; Lalinde Abadía, "Virreyes y lugartenientes"; and Earenfight, "Without the Person," 4–6.

81. See below.

> normally, men of the world allow themselves to be influenced by those they love greatly, amongst whom is the sensible God-fearing woman. Therefore, he says that the proper calling of such a woman, and that which gives the most pleasure to and serves God best, is for her to have great vigilance over herself, and others, that her husband may be a good man, and far from the vices, so that he might draw close to God, and may remain at all times in the good esteem of his land and his vassals. And in doing so, such a woman deserves to be loved dearly by our Lord God, and by her husband, and also, by all of her people.[82]

Then he recounts the case of Robert I (1309–43), king of Naples, titular king of Jerusalem, and Count of Provence and Foulcalquier. Robert was known in his own time as "the Wise," and was praised as a "new Solomon," and lauded as a cultured and generous patron of the arts by such literary luminaries as Boccaccio and Petrarch.[83] For Eiximenis, however, Robert and the praise he received from secular authors were a sham. In the friar's view, such prudence and wisdom that were attributable to his reign resided not in the king, but in his wife, Sanxa de Mallorca—the true but unacknowledged source of Robert's apparent piety and wisdom.

Eiximenis's historical parallel is somewhat undermined by the fact that he got Sanxa's name wrong, referring to her as "Constança"—but aside from this, the basic historical narrative he recounts is fundamentally accurate.[84] Sanxa of Mallorca (c. 1285–1345) was the daughter of Jaume II of Mallorca (1276–1311) and Esclarmonda of Foix, born during the interval in which Mallorca was a vassal kingdom of the Crown of Aragon, having been severed by the testament of Jaume I (1213–76), who left his mainland principalities south of the Pyrenees to his son Pere (the Great; 1276–85) and Mallorca, Roussillon, and Montpellier to Jaume. In 1343, when Eiximenis would have been three years old, and just two years before Sanxa died, Pere the Ceremonious conquered the island and reincorporated the Kingdom of Mallorca into the Crown.[85]

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82. BNE: Ms. 92, ff. 9v–10r.

83. On Robert of Naples, see Kelly, *The New Solomon,* particularly 73–132; and Goldstone, *The Lady Queen,* 19–34. See chapter 1.

84. Eiximenis confuses Sanxa's name as "Constança," but it is clear that he is referring to the former. There was a historical "Constança de Mallorca," but she was Constança of Aragon (1318–1346), the daughter of Alfons the Liberal (1285–91), king of the Crown of Aragon, and, therefore, the sister of Pere the Ceremonious. But she was also the wife of Jaume III of Mallorca and as such the last queen of an independent Mallorca (hence, perhaps, the confusion). Pere the Ceremonious annexed Mallorca to the Crown of Aragon in 1342 on the pretext of Jaume III's refusal to pledge allegiance to him. See Bisson, *The Medieval Crown,* 104–32.

85. King Pere the Ceremonious incorporated Mallorca in the Crown of Aragon in 1343, and Rosselló in 1344. Sanxa of Mallorca, queen of Naples, died in 1345.

By this time Sanxa had become a key figure in the Kingdom of Naples: she was serving as regent on behalf of her granddaughter, Joanna, and was an active patroness of the Franciscans. As such, Sanxa provided a perfect example for Eiximenis to hold out to Maria, who had also taken over the running of a kingdom out of necessity. And just as Maria had been authorized by Martí to serve as lieutenant, Sanxa had been appointed as regent by her husband, Robert, in his will. And just as Eiximenis had hoped Maria would do, Sanxa stepped down and retreated into a life of pious contemplation as soon as possible. Moreover, Sanxa was a vocal and active defender and protector of the Spiritual Franciscans, a model of Franciscanism that, in her day, sought to reform the order, and return to the purity of the ideal of Saint Francis, against the resistance of the papacy.[86] In Maria's era, the Friars Minor were undergoing a similar process of redefinition, now within the framework of Observant Franciscanism, of which Eiximenis was a proponent, and that he hoped Maria would champion. The Observant movement had similar goals to those of the Spiritual Franciscans, but their concept of reform was oriented more toward contemplation and the spiritual transformation of the order from within—it was more politically moderate, and less directly concerned with worldly affairs than the Spiritualists had been.

The historical Sanxa is indeed a fascinating character, more complex and nuanced than the literary figure that Eiximenis briefly constructs in the *Scala Dei*. Sanxa was extremely active as regards the Friars Minor. Among other things, four letters that she submitted to the general chapters of the order (between 1316 and 1331, and in 1334) were recorded in contemporary Franciscan chronicles, such as the *Chronica XXIV generalium ordinis fratrum minorum* (*General Chronicle of the Franciscan Order*), written by Arnaud de Sarrant (c. 1369–74)—accounts that Eiximenis undoubtedly knew.[87] Thanks both to Franciscan authors and to the general perception of her, Sanxa was widely portrayed during her own lifetime as a "holy queen," and as the descendant of a very pious family, known for its deep devotion to God and support for the Franciscans.[88] Sanxa, the granddaughter of Jaume I the Conqueror, was of course a scion of the same Barcelona dynasty that would produce Martí I, and Maria's son, Martí the Young. Jaume II of Mallorca and Esclarmonda de Foix engendered not only a daughter, Sanxa, but also four sons: Jaume,

86. Spiritual Franciscans emphasized strict poverty and literal observance of the Rule of St. Francis, in contrast to the more moderate, mainstream Relaxed Franciscans (*Relaxati*). See Burn, *The Spiritual* Franciscans; Robson, *The Franciscans,* 119–29; and Kolpacoff, *A History of Medieval Heresy.*

87. Musto, "Queen Sancia," 179.

88. See Gaglione, "Sancia d'Aragona Maiorca"; Gaglione, "Sancia d'Aragona-Maiorca"; Greiner, "Une reine méconnue"; and Jornet-Benito, "Sança de Mallorca."

Sanxo, Ferran, and Felip. The eldest son, Jaume, was slated to succeed his father, but a meeting with Saint Louis of Toulouse (himself a son of Charles II, the Angevin king of Naples; 1285–1309) stirred the religious vocation within him. And so he took up the habit of the Friars Minor, and left the throne to his brother Sanxo, who ruled from 1311 to 1324, but died childless. Of Sanxa's other two brothers, Ferran was named Prince of Achaea (in the Peloponnese), and Felip, the youngest, also became a friar. Felip's interest in the order had been sparked by a meeting with John Olivi and Angelo Clareno, two important Spiritual Franciscans.[89] When King Sanxo, died, his brother Friar Felip was appointed regent of the kingdom on behalf of his nephew, Jaume III, Ferran's son. By 1328, as soon as the child was old enough to claim the crown, Felip resigned his regency and moved to Naples to live with his sister Sanxa, and to found, under her protection and support, a Franciscan house in Naples whose mission was to follow the Rule of St. Francis in the strictest sense.[90]

It would be hard to imagine a royal family more marked by the religious vocation or attraction to the Franciscan order than the House of Mallorca.[91] Three of Sanxa's brothers renounced their rights to the throne of their kingdom, and rejected a life of courtly ostentation for the poverty and humility of a mendicant friar—and, in the case of Felip, a Spiritualist Franciscan, committed to reestablishing the austerity of the order's founder. Whether it was her own vocation or the weight of familial consensus, Sanxa too pined for the mendicant life. Twice (once prior to September 1316, and again in 1317) she directly petitioned Pope John XXII (1316–34) to annul her marriage to Robert of Naples so that she could abandon the world and take up the habit of a Poor Clare.[92] And if, in her obsession for the spiritual world, she failed to provide a child for Robert, this was a less urgent matter, given that he had already produced an heir, Charles of Calabria, by his first wife, Violant of Aragon (a daughter of Pere the Great; r. 1276–85). In the event, Sanxa's ambition was realized only in 1344, the year before her death, when after

89. Musto, "Queen Sancia," 182.

90. Ibid.

91. The House of Barcelona also had members who were well known for their piety: Jaume (c. 1296–1334) and Isabel. As the son of Jaume II and Blanca d'Anjou, Jaume was the heir of the Crown of Aragon, but renounced the throne in 1319 for the monastic life. Hinojosa Montalvo, *Jaime II,* 76–79; and Martínez Ferrando, *Jaime II.* The *infanta* Isabel was the daughter of Pere the Great (1276–85) and Constança of Sicily. In 1288 she married King Denis of Portugal. After her husband's death in 1325 she retired to the Clarissan convent that she had founded, Santa Clara-a-Velha in Coimbra. She was canonized in 1625. See San Vicente Pino, *Isabel de Aragón*.

92. Musto, "Queen Sancia," 186.

having been widowed the previous year, she took the vows of a Clarissan nun at the monastery of the Santa Croce that she had founded in Naples.[93]

As such, the royal court at Mallorca, and subsequently that of Naples, were hothouses of Franciscanism—more so undoubtedly than any other contemporary European courts. This trend intensified after 1328 when, disillusioned by the death of his only child, Charles, the aging Robert (then fifty-one), whose wife was now past childbearing years, turned increasingly to the spirituality of Sanxa. The queen herself was very conscious of her family's role in the Franciscan order, and did not hesitate to remind the friars of this fact. In her letters to the order's chapters Sanxa reminded them of the dedication and sacrifice of her brothers, and in order to underline her own authority, cataloged the long involvement with the order of her ancestors—particular the women, and not only on her father's side, but also her mother's. She described Esclarmonda de Foix as "a true daughter of the Blessed Francis," and recalled her great-aunt, Elizabeth (Erzsébet) of Hungary, "a devoted daughter of the Blessed Francis, and mother of his Order."[94] Sanxa was not exaggerating; after Elizabeth (1207–31), a princess who became Countess of Thuringia, was widowed at age twenty, she gave up her worldly belongings to serve the poor and sick, apparently in the habit of the newly approved Third Order of Saint Francis. She died at age twenty-four and was canonized within four years of her death.[95]

Sanxa deployed this family lineage and her position as queen to give authority to the requests she sent to Franciscan authorities. Presenting herself as a "mother" to the order, she interceded in favor of those Franciscans who, like her own brothers, yearned to return to the letter of the founder's Rule: "To observe the holy gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ, living in obedience without anything of our own, and in chastity," which—according to their doctrine—was nothing less than Gospel.[96] Her petition of 1331 presents her as composing the letter in Latin without any aid (although she almost certainly had the counsel of the Franciscans in her entourage, not the least, her brother Felip). She claims to have written the letter all alone, at night, by the light of a candle and in the privacy of her chapel, at the beginning of what is presented as a long night of prayer and meditation. In other words, Sanxa

93. Heullant-Donat, "En amont de l'Observance," 76; Greiner, "Une reine méconnue," 126.

94. Heullant-Donat, "En amont de l'Observance," 80; Musto, "Queen Sancia."

95. She was the namesake of the Valencian convent that served as the refuge for Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, Eiximenis's previous patroness. See above, chapter 2; also Klaniczay, *Holy Ruler,* 202–43.

96. This was the first tenet of the Rule of St. Francis. See Heullant-Donat, "En amont de l'Observance," 82.

was disposed of a private space for solitary nocturnal prayer, just as Eiximenis wanted Maria de Luna to have.

But this is only the most superficial of parallels between Sanxa and Maria. Most importantly, the historical Queen Sanxa was a key defender of the Spiritual Franciscans, the most stalwart of whom rebelled against the authority of their order and the pontiff in the second decade of the fourteenth century, and were burned at the stake in 1318. Sanxa, for her part, was adamant that friars should have the opportunity to closely observe the letter of their Rule, and claimed in 1331 that she was willing to become a martyr for that just cause.[97] By the time Eiximenis, who was born at about this time, had risen through the ranks of the order, the will to reform still burned, but now it was phrased in terms of Observantism, which like the Spiritual movement before it, placed an emphasis on absolute poverty, rejecting even the common ownership of property (as in Conventualism) as well as vested incomes or the accumulation of material goods. Eiximenis was a strenuous advocate of this new reform movement, and he wrote the *Scala Dei* in order to inspire Maria de Luna into supporting his cause, holding out Sanxa of Mallorca ("Constança") as an exemplary and holy queen, on whom she should model her own reign.

Gender and Performance

In the *Scala Dei* Eiximenis portrays Robert of Naples as an effeminate king, who brings misfortune on his realm by neglecting the affairs of state in favor of womanly pastimes—another early example of the notion of "performative gender." As Eiximenis tells it, instead of directing his attention to matters of state, Robert devoted his time to trivialities (*mesquinesses*), and to domestic activities and "feminine things, appropriate only for ladies-in-waiting" (*coses fembrils i pertanyents a doncelles*).[98] This went on for some time, until one day his wife, "Queen Constança" (which is to say, Sanxa), the daughter of the king of Mallorca, could not longer contain herself. As a man, she said, it was his duty to rule the kingdom, and it fell to her to pass the days doing embroidery with the ladies of the court:

> Lord! I pray you, if this is how little you care about what your duty is, then go ahead and take up the spindle, and I will take up the shield and the lance, for no kingdom is served by having two queens. In other

97. See Heullant-Donat, "En amont de l'Observance," 89.
98. BNE: Ms. 92, f. 10r.

> words, either you will be queen, or I. And if you do wish me to be queen, then I demand that you be a king. That is to say, you should consider the good government of the kingdom, and attend your counselors, and the well-being of the kingdom, and I will be with my ladies in my chamber, once I have chased out all of the men from there.[99]

In what seems like quite a modern observation, Eiximenis saw sexual identity as being physically determined, but gender as constructed through repeated action and habit. Hence, and as noted above, anticipating Butler, the Franciscan describes how by following ladylike pursuits, the king was becoming a queen, and the natural order designed by God was being inverted.[100] An inversion of this type struck fear in medieval and early modern theologians and political theorists, from Eiximenis to Machiavelli, as it was seen as potentially catastrophic to society.[101] In the narrative of the *Scala Dei,* Robert heeds his wife's reprimand, leaves his effeminate ways, and begins to act like a male king, all the while thanking "Constança" for her good advice: "Queen, may God save me, I must be worthy of great honor and love, that you told me such a great truth and have given me such great, profitable, and honorable counsel, that I will forever forward obey."[102]

Now, if for Eiximenis and his ilk, the case of a man, like Robert, acting like a weak woman was discomfiting, then the case of a strong woman acting like a king would be even more dramatic, as it would have forced a reconsideration of the very concept of male royal power. It would have upended long-established gender roles and would have generated tremendous anxiety, not only among writers, political theorists, and clergymen, but also among the population at large.[103] In patriarchal societies the separation of authority and power is based on a premise of inequality that produces disequilibrium between the genders, and it is this inequality that is used to rationalize the superior status of men. Hence, a blurring of gender roles can undermine that separation, and threaten the social and political privilege of those on top—men. It was a fine line a queen like Maria de Luna had to toe—she

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99. BNE: Ms. 92, f. 10r.

100. Butler, *Gender Trouble,* 33–41.

101. For Machiavelli "effeminate" was an attribute reserved for the worst kings or rulers. See Pitkin, *Fortune Is a Woman,* 109–10.

102. BNE: Ms. 92, f. 10r.

103. In his analysis of English literature written during the reign of Elizabeth I (1558–1603), Breitenberg defines anxiety as "a state of suspicion without trust, doubt that is incapable of faith, perpetual uncertainty," referencing Freud's "particular state of expecting danger or preparing for it." See Breitenberg, *Anxious Masculinity,* 4–5. Similar tensions can be observed in the case of Isabel I of Castile. See Weissberger, *Isabel Rules,* xiv–xvi; Long, *High Anxiety,* xi–xii; and Archer, *The Problem of Woman,* 7.

should guide her husband morally, but not direct him politically. Hence, Eiximenis concludes the anecdote with the exhortation "See that you give the counsel of a good and pious woman."[104] She should give counsel—pious counsel—but nothing more.

It was not by chance that Eiximenis chose to include the story of Robert and "Constança" in the *Scala Dei*. It would have been obvious to any reader that Martí I of Aragon, known to contemporaries as "the Ecclesiastic," bore more than a passing resemblance to Robert of Naples, and that Maria, like Constança, was a woman of capacity and determination. In the letters that Eiximenis and Friar Marí wrote to Martí in 1392, before there was any indication he would inherit the Crown of Aragon, they were already pointing out the need for a lord to act like a man—to pray less, and fight more. Now that four years later, in 1396, his wife, Maria, had not only claimed and preserved the throne in his absence, but had ruled like a monarch and general for a year, they saw a danger in her being perceived as the real power and authority on the throne. This was dangerous, and Eiximenis needed to put the brakes on; by evoking the model of Sanxa, he could not only remind Maria of the religious nature of her role as queen, but steer her support toward the Franciscan reform movement he was championing.

Indeed, this was not the first time Eiximenis made use of the parable of Robert I and Constança. As noted above, it also appears in chapter 56 of the *Llibre de les dones,* under the rubric "How the manners of women of other nations are not good in every way, and how it is good that women know how to read." Here, Constança is held up as proof that it is good that women learn to read and write, as it was this capacity that guided the widowed queen of Naples—a "holy queen" (*santa regina*)—down the path to becoming a Clarissan nun, admired by men and pleasing to God.[105] Constança is a model of virtuous womanhood and queenship that would be presented in an even more exaggerated form a century and a half later by the Castilian adapter of the *Llibre de les dones,* in a book prepared for Catalina of Habsburg, queen consort of João III (1525–57) and, later, regent (1557–62) of Portugal.[106] By that point, however, the paradigmatic "holy queen" was no longer Sanxa of Mallorca, but rather, Isabel the Catholic, Catalina's grandmother, a queen with a reputation for great piety, who also supported the Observant Franciscans.

104. BNE: Ms. 92, f. 10r.
105. See Viera, "On the King's Chancellor," 90.
106. See below, chapter 5.

Franciscan Queenship and the *Scala Dei*

Eiximenis continues his advice to Maria in the section of the *Scala Dei* dedicated to the second contemplation, in which he advises the queen on how to prepare herself for death. During this discourse he lays out the rules that she should follow in order to obtain divine reward, citing Theophilus of Alexandria. At this point, he turns once more to the role of the queen, this time using the example of a ruler he refers to as the "king of Babylon," who wrote a letter to his daughter, the queen of Poland. In this missive, the king maintains that the office of queen has four duties:

> The first is to at all times consider how she might please God better, and serve Him as queen.
>
> The second is that at all times she ought to help her husband maintain peace and proper justice in his kingdom and not abuse them with tyranny; rather, that he show himself to be kind and dear to his people, and take counsel from a few chosen, God-fearing men, and who eschew greed and who are dedicated to the common good, and are not looking out for themselves.
>
> The third is that she ensure that her dependents be well-cared for, and well situated.
>
> The fourth is that she fortify herself at all times with prayers and sacrifices of holy and devout individuals, and that she follow the counsel of persons of good reputation and good character, be they women or be they men, by whom her house may be well-governed and righteously safeguarded.[107]

Eiximenis could hardly have been less subtle: a good queen should surround herself with advisers who were just like him, and treat them well. In doing so she would best serve her husband, her kingdom, and God.

These ideas at once resonated with and went far beyond the religious expectations of queens. Medieval queens' primary function was essentially biological—to provide a legitimate heir for their kingdom that would secure the continuity of the dynasty and, by implication, assure the political stability that supported the social and political structure of the kingdom, and the patrimonial edifice on which it rested. As wife and mother she occupied conventional female roles that situated her under male authority. Queens were expected to cultivate an image of piety and modesty, but be cultured and sophisticated enough for their rank and station, so as not to shame the king.

107. BNE: Ms. 92, f. 14v.

They had to be charitable and pious, but they were not expected to pursue the path of contemplation that Eiximenis advocated.[108] For instance, in his legal compilation *Las siete partidas* (*The Seven-Part Code;* c. 1265) Alfonso X "the Learned," king of Castile (1252–84), summarized the primary characteristics of an ideal queen as follows: "Wherefore the king ought to bear in mind that she whom he marries should be endowed with four qualities. First, she should come of a good family; second, she should be handsome; third, she should have good habits; fourth, she should be wealthy."[109] The monarch goes on to specify that lineage and good behavior are in fact a queen's most important attributes, given that ultimately beauty and money never last. More to the point, he did not include religious devotion, or patronage of the church, as an essential or recommendable quality.

In the Middle Ages queens were also seen as peacemakers, and as intercessors between the king and his subjects, following biblical models, such Queen Esther and the Virgin Mary—both paragons of obedience and virtue.[110] Tapestries illustrating the story of Esther figured prominently in many European courts, including that of Isabel the Catholic, and the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I (1486–1519). Indeed, when Maximilian sent his daughter, Margaret of Habsburg, to Castile to marry the Catholic Kings' heir, Prince Juan, among the treasures she brought with her were tapestries, including four of Esther and Ahasuerus.[111] A century and a half earlier, when Pere the Ceremonious took Esther as a model for the queen as he established the coronation ritual for the Crown of Aragon in his *Ordinacions* in 1353, he was following a European tradition.[112] In the *Ordinacions* Pere specified

108. Parsons, "The Pregnant Queen," 42; Bratsch-Prince, "A Queen's Task."

109. See Alfonso X, *Las siete partidas,* 1:298 (Two, V I:1). The king set precise regulations to ensure that the queen, along with her ladies-in-waiting would be protected and served. In his earlier *Espéculo* (c. 1255), Alfonso granted the concubine similar rights to those of the queen. See Segura Graíño, "Participación de las mujeres"; Vann, "The Theory and Practice," 126; Silleras-Fernandez, "Reginalitat," 133.

110. On queenship, see, for example, Fradenburg, "Rethinking Queenship"; Harrison, *The Age of Abbesses;* Huneycutt, "Intercession"; Nelson, "Medieval Queenship"; Parsons, *Medieval Queenship;* Benham, *Peacemaking in the Middle Ages;* Earenfight, *Medieval Queenship.*

111. Along with the four tapestries of Ahasuerus and Esther, she also brought two of Holofernes and Judith. Both Esther and Judith were seen as models to imitate. See Sánchez Cantón, *Libros, tapices y cuadros,* 38–39.

112. In his *ordinació* for the coronation of the queen, Pere the Ceremonious established: "Thus, We order that the queens of Aragon should be consecrated by the Archbishop, and crowned by the kings of Aragon, just as has been related above, since we have a clear precedent in King Assuer, who crowned Esther, where it is said: *He placed the crown on her head*." *Ordinacions,* 266–67; cf. Esther 2:17.

Esther is also remembered in the regulations of other European queenly coronations, such as those compiled by Hincmar in 876, in which Esther, along with other important women from the Old Testament, serves as a model for the coronation of Judith, daughter of Charles the Bold. See Huneycutt, "Intercession," 129.

that the function of the queen is to be a partner for the monarch, neither superior nor inferior—taking a page from Genesis: "It is not good for a man to be alone; let us make him a helper that resembles him."[113] Because God created Eve from Adam's rib, and not from a "higher" part of the body (*parts sobiranes*), such as the head, nor a "lower" part (*parts jussanes*), such as the feet, women are neither above nor below men, but almost equal, given that the rib is exactly in the middle of the body.[114] For his part, in his *Llibre de les dones* Eiximenis also used Esther as an example, but in a somewhat less complimentary sense. He drew on the other characterization of that Old Testament queen—as the archetype of a woman that was not concerned with appearance, makeup, luxury, and fine clothes. For the friar, she is an advertisement of the dangers of beauty, and of women that are too concerned about makeup and luxurious dresses—"because beauty is the instrument and the way of perdition." And yet Esther uses her beauty wisely: in order to ensure that her husband complied with God's plan.[115]

This ideal of queenship developed as a response to the anxieties of male writers, particularly clerics, and a masculine-dominated society that endeavored to give queens a concrete but limited role and set boundaries for their clearly considerable power. As women, they could never aspire to be truly equal to men, either in physical terms (because they could not compare as warriors) or in conceptual terms (as they comprised a secondary, if not dysfunctional, gender). On the other hand, the place that theologians and ideologues ceded to them, that of a go-between between king and subjects, of a moral compass, and of an instrument of divine Providence, was one that embodied tremendous possibilities for wielding power and influence—one that astute women could exploit with tremendous effect. This role gave queens a formal avenue to engage in governing, act as peacemakers and advisers, and create their own space at court. This provided an opportunity for queens, like other women of the medieval and early modern periods, to appropriate and turn to their own personal and political advantage the same ideologies and stereotypes regarding gender roles that were developed to marginalize them, and brought them into play for their advantage—the

113. *Ordinacions,* 266; cf. Genesis 2:18.

114. "Eve was not taken from the feet of Adam to be his slave, nor from his head to be his ruler, but from his side to be his beloved partner." *Ordinacions,* 266. See Lombard, *Sententiae,* I:II. Dist. XVIII (*De formatione mulieres*); Augustine, *De Genesi ad Literam,* 1, IX, c. 13; Aquinas, *Summa Theologica,* I, q. 92, a. 3; Schaff, *History of the Christian Church,* 2:363. See also Genesis 2:18 and 23.

115. On the one hand, Eiximenis railed against vain women who used makeup; see his *Llibre de les dones,* chaps. XXV (I:44–45); XXVI (I:45–48); and XXVII (I:48–50). On the other hand, he did not think that women should let themselves go, because that could lead their husbands to become bored with them, and thus be tempted into adultery. See *LD,* I:50–52).

weapons of the weak.[116] Maria de Luna was no exception to this tendency—one that shows the limits of discourse. As critics like Foucault have pointed out, discourse was created and perpetuated by those members of the elite who decided what was normative, like Eiximenis, and to some extent like Maria. In any case, it would not be power without resistance.[117] This view resonates with the traditional historiographical discourse that constructed the medieval monarchy (including the role of the queen) in very narrow terms. As the many studies on queenship written in the last decade or so have shown, that vision is obsolete; queens were fully engaged in the mechanisms of government and patronage, and the monarchy tended to be more "plural" (involving the queen and other members of the royal family in the circles of power) than "singular" (with the king as the only powerful or authoritative figure).[118]

Following and Subverting the Model

Using inventories of libraries as a source for intellectual history has its limits, given that they tell who *owned* which books rather than who *read* them. We cannot assume that individuals read all of the books they had copies of; and, indeed, the bigger the library, the less likely it was that the owner had read everything. That said, there is little doubt that Maria not only owned a copy of *Scala Dei,* but also used it. It is clear that she read the book alongside the *Llibre de les dones,* and other didactic/moral literature, and used it to carefully construct her own queenly image in a very particular light and with the express aim of maximizing her power. Her charters and letters make it clear that she consciously labored to resemble the type of queen recommended by Eiximenis. For example, throughout her entire reign, she ruled and exercised executive authority as a queen, but took care to appear to stay within the limits established for women—appearing no different from her many contemporaries in other European kingdoms.[119] She was careful always to present herself as being secondary to the king, and to surround herself with clerics of great reputation, who both provided her with counsel and acted as bona fides for her virtue, and who—in appreciation for her support—composed letters, treatises, and sermons that reinforced her reputation. She main-

116. See for example, Vollendorf, "Good Sex, Bad Sex."

117. Foucault, "Why Study Power?," 212–13; Certeau, *The Practices of Everyday Life,* 48–50.

118. For instance, see a reconsideration of the monarchical institution and of the dynamics of queenly power and authority in Iberian queenship in the works of Earenfight, Shadis, Bianchini, Woodacre, and Silleras-Fernandez.

119. Wolf, "Reigning Queens."

tained a rotating entourage of clergy and other religious figures, cultivating and dispensing patronage to the Poor Clares of Santa Maria de la Serra in Montblanc, to nuns from the Benedictine monastery of Valldonzella, where her cousin Constança de Cabrera was abbess, and especially to Franciscans, whom she favored as counselors and confessors.[120]

Maria may have been inspired by Brother Francesc, but her own experiences would have taught her the importance of maintaining her reputation. She had been witness to and participant in the traumatic fall of her two predecessors as queens of the Crown of Aragon: Sibil·la de Fortià and Violant de Bar. Both had been harshly criticized by their contemporaries for presuming a status and authority unbecoming of women, misleading their husbands, choosing inappropriate advisers, and dissipating the royal treasury on vanities.[121] Sibil·la was a member of the Catalan lower nobility; illiterate at the time she married the king, she had to resort to recruiting nuns to teach her basic reading and writing.[122] Her lower status was never pardoned by the upper nobility, who resented the prize of the crown going to a woman from a family not of their own and below their station. Violant, for her part, was neutralized politically by Maria, who dispossessed her of her patrimony, and forced her to live thereafter at her mercy. Both Sibil·la and Violant had ended in their lives in relative isolation, and with very diminished income as dowagers. Hence, Eiximenis was not being overly subtle when he reminded Maria of the fate of queens who exceeded their station by pointing toward the living exemplum of Violant de Bar and Joan I, thinly disguising their story in a parable in the *Scala Dei*. There, he recounts the tale of a certain Teutonic king (unnamed) who had surrounded himself with evil advisers, neglected his duty as a ruler, and whose wife—no Constança de Mallorca—did not use her influence to pull him back in line. In due time, the king died, and since he had not produced an heir, his dowager was abandoned by the court to poverty—just like Violant, who left only a daughter, and therefore, could make no solid claim to the throne. Eiximenis spared no melodrama to hammer home his message: "Since the queen, his wife, had allowed all of these things that she could have corrected, she was expelled from the kingdom after the death of her husband, and lived thereafter as if a person suffering from an incurable malady, and in great misery and poverty, and abandoned by all living kind."[123]

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120. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 130.

121. Silleras-Fernandez, "Money Isn't Everything"; Silleras-Fernandez, "Widowhood and Deception," 187–96.

122. Roca, "La reyna empordanesa," 13 and 159.

123. BNE: Ms. 92, f. 67r–v.

Hence, when Maria de Luna wrote her many letters (or rather, dictated them, because medieval queens wrote little and dictated much)—hundreds of which are conserved to this day in the registers of the royal chancery—she made sure that they bore the unmistakable stamp of her regal authority, but carefully fashioned herself as secondary to the king. Presenting her authority as secondary did not diminish it—on the contrary, it increased it, given that it located her activities within the realm of moral and social acceptability, and therefore endowed them with greater legitimacy and force. For example, when in 1396 she was obliged to write to the city councillors of Valencia complaining that they were not enforcing moral standards in the city's convents, she underlined their responsibility by reminding them that "after the lord-king *and Us,* you are the governors" of the city.[124] In other words, Maria was below the king, but above them. And in this case in particular, she was becoming something of a Constança of Mallorca, making it her responsibility that the clergy of her realm were honest and following the rule laid out for them.

On the other hand, when she wrote to Martí, she was careful *not* to appear as a Constança, because this would make him, by implication, an effeminate and inefficacious King Robert. Thus, when in 1406 she was determined to force him to go personally to the Kingdom of Valencia, which was at the point of collapse due to noble feuding, she began her letter by invoking her subordinate status: "Whereas in You reposes great comprehension by the Grace of God, that which is found in me is rather slow and not so perfect."[125] Once she had positioned herself in this manner, however, she did not hesitate to tell Martí directly that she felt he was wrong and should be taking her advice. Moreover, taking a page from Eiximenis, she stressed he should act as a responsible ruler, not for his own benefit, but out of fear of God, "to whom you will have to render an account of the things entrusted to you, a lord from which nothing is hidden or covered up."[126] After such an aggressive letter, she returned to the conciliatory and submissive tone proper of a wife: "And I beg you humbly, lord, not to be cross if there are overly strong words in this letter, since it is out of my great anxiety for the ill state in which the said City of Valencia is, that I have dared to write to your lordship in the above-contained manner."[127]

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124. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 167; emphasis mine.

125. ACA: CR, Cartas Reales, caja 8, 893 (Barcelona, 18 January 1406), ed. Javierre, *María de Luna,* 282; another copy is at ACA: CR, Reg. 2352, ff. 78r–79v. See also Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 104.

126. Javierre, *María de Luna,* 284.

127. ACA: CR, Cartas Reales, caja 8, 892 (Barcelona, 18 January 1406), ed. Javierre, *María de Luna,* 283–84. See also Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 103–7.

Martí and Maria had been raised together as children in the court of his mother, and shared an intimacy as adults unusual for royal couples of this age. Even so, Maria had to resort to encoding her criticisms in a submissive tone—these letters, after all, were not private communications written by her, in the privacy of her bedroom (as Sanxa of Mallorca and Isabel the Catholic claimed), and her husband was not the only audience. They were documents of state, dictated by Maria to a scribe of her chancery, most likely in the presence of other functionaries. Before they were sent, the text was copied into a register of outgoing correspondence—in this case, the top-secret section called *sigillo secreto* (secret seal). When they arrived, the letters were most likely read aloud to Martí by one of his secretaries in the presence of his most trusted officials of his court, a group that always included clergymen. As Martin Camargo points out, a medieval letter "is among the most formalized, least spontaneous types of discourse."[128] Indeed, as Giles Constable notes, "In the Middle Ages letters were for the most part self-conscious, quasi-public literary documents, often written with an eye to future collection and publication."[129]

Maria de Luna was a queen; therefore, her letters were never as private as those of other women of her time. She was conscious of her audience, and of the third parties who would hear them, and this knowledge contributed to the tone and content of her correspondence. She moved within the framework established as proper for women of her time, deploying the discursive strategies that writers like Eiximenis helped articulate. For instance, the rhetorical strategy of diminishing oneself, of employing a *captatio benevolentiae* in order to provide cover when overstepping what were considered to be appropriate boundaries, while still showing clear agency and decision, was also used by other medieval and early modern women. For example, Margherita Datini, the wife of Francesco Datini, the famous merchant of Prato, and a contemporary of Maria, had a long relationship in correspondence with her husband, and like Maria, served as the "lieutenant" of her husband's business. Also, like Maria, she usually used a scribe to mediate between herself and her husband—in her case, because she initially did not know how to read or write. Using the same technique of *captatio benevolentiae,* in April 1394 Margherita wrote to Francesco: "My secretary writes worse letters every day, but it is no surprise, since he is directed by a woman [i.e., Margherita herself]. You have really left me to organize so many things, that they would

128. Camargo, "Where's the Brief?," 7.
129. Constable, *Letters and Letter Collections,* 12.

be enough even for a man; the secretary of the *Signoria* would have less to do than mine has."[130]

As it was, the use of a nonthreatening subordinate posture was a regular strategy employed by women during this period. For example, the nun Teresa de Cartagena (1425–78) felt obliged to defer at the beginning of her *Arboleda de los enfermos* (*Grove of the Infirm*): "And since the baseness and rudeness of my womanly nature doesn't allow me to know more, I dare . . ."[131] The same can be observed of Saint Teresa de Jesús (1515–82), who used a simple and brilliant literary style to discuss rather complex theological truths, and who, like Maria de Luna, was well aware that for women to be able to become influential they needed to take care of the perceptions that others had of them. As Teresa wrote in her *Libro de las fundaciones* (*Foundations*), "We are in a world in which it is necessary to consider the opinions others have of us in order that our words take effect."[132] Thus, counterintuitively, women like Maria, Margherita, and the two Teresas followed a script of subservience and subordination to gain the agency necessary to achieve their goals and act independently before male audiences. Indeed, this is little different from the strategy of *captatio benevolentiae* used by Eiximenis in his dedications to Maria de Luna and to Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, and it was intended to achieve similar results—as a mere commoner and cleric, Eiximenis also had to be careful not to exceed the bounds of his station when he addressed these powerful aristocrats, women as they were. As we will see in the next chapter, Isabel the Catholic also used similar strategies in some of her letters. She was a product of the same sociocultural environment—like Maria, she owned and read many devotional books, and like Maria, she read Eiximenis.

The End of a Dynasty and the End of Eiximenis

Maria de Luna died in Villareal on 28 December 1406, en route from Barcelona to Valencia, where she was heading to help her husband tame the incorrigibly rebellious nobility of the kingdom. Had she made it, she would have undoubtedly met Eiximenis once more. As it was, just before she died she wrote her last will and testament and appointed her favorite Franciscans among her executors: her confessor, Joan Eximeno, Bartomeu Borràs, and, of course, Francesc Eiximenis.[133] In her will she repaid her dear friars, and

130. James, "A Woman's Path," 52 (letter from Margherita to Francesco [15 April 1394]). See also Cecchi, *Le lettere,* 93–94.

131. Teresa de Cartagena, *Arboleda de los enfermos,* 38.

132. Slade, *St. Teresa of Avila,* 1, *Foundations,* 8.7.

133. Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 161–63.

also gave numerous rents to the convent of the Sancti Spiritu, which she had founded—rather too many, indeed, for an institution that was supposed to adhere to the rigidly austere ideals of the Observant movement.[134] Martí the Young, Maria and Martí's only surviving child, died not long after, on 25 July 1409, leaving only two illegitimate children. On 17 September of that same year, King Martí, now desperately in need of an heir, married Margarida de Prades—none other than Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós's granddaughter, who had been a lady-in-waiting at Maria's court.[135] Eiximenis had passed away five months earlier, and Martí I would not survive a year of his second marriage. The king's death on 31 May 1410 marked the end of the dynasty of the Catalan count-kings that had ruled the Crown of Aragon since its creation in 1162, and Barcelona and its subject counties since the ninth century.

Even though Eiximenis would not live to witness the challenges that faced the Crown as a result of Martí's death and the failure of his line, the political ideology of *pactisme* that he formulated, and that rested on a process of dialogue between sovereign and subjects, would serve the realm well as it faced the prospect of choosing and empowering a new ruler. In the event, the parliaments were summoned, and representatives of the three most important territories, the Principality of Catalonia, and the Kingdoms of Aragon and Valencia, were chosen to evaluate the various aspirants who presented their candidacy for the throne. The conclave, which met at the town of Caspe (in Aragon) in 1412, ultimately settled on a Castilian prince of the House of Trastámara, Fernando de Antequera (Ferran d'Antequera). Fernando was the second-born son of Juan I of Castile (1379–90) and Elionor of Aragon (the daughter of Pere the Ceremonious, and sister of Martí I).[136] As a result, from 1412 onward, the two most important dynastic entities of the peninsula, the Crowns of Castile and of Aragon, came under the rule of a single dynasty. As Alfons the Magnanimous (1416–58), the son of Fernando de Antequera, put it in 1452 in a memo regarding "peace in the peninsula" (*la pau de Spanya*)

134. ACA: CR, Reg. 2353, ff. 7v–9r [Second numeration], (Monasterio de San Bernardo, Huerta de Valencia, 21 October 1404), in Agulló Pascual, "Fundación y dotación," 145–49. Another copy is at ARV: CR, perg. reales, nº 30. The queen gave a total of 7,000 *sous* annually, and Martí I, as one of the executors of her will, was in charge of giving the assignation to the friars. ACA: CR, Reg. 2311, ff. 137r–138r (Valencia, 3 August 1407), ed. Ivars and Webster, "Franciscanismo," 118–22. See also ARV: CR, perg. reales, núm. 34 (Valencia, 7 June 1407); and ACA: CR, Reg. 2311, ff. 168v–169r (Monastery of Valldonzella, 20 May 1410). See also Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 123–25. See more on the donation in Agulló Pascual, "Fundación y dotación," 136 and 144–55; and Sanchís Alventosa, *Santo Espíritu*.

135. Fort Cogul, *La llegenda,* 61; Silleras-Fernandez, "Widowhood and Deception," 196–203; Silleras-Fernandez, "Dues reines per un rei."

136. See above, chapter 2.

that he dispatched from Naples to his wife and lieutenant, Maria of Castile, "Due to the bonds of blood that there are between the Illustrious Kings of Castile, Navarre, and Portugal, you can say that we all belong to the same House."[137] Eiximenis, Maria de Luna, Martí I, and the House of Barcelona had all met their end within a decade, and a new era was about to begin. The rise of Trastámaran hegemony would have enormous repercussions for the future of the Iberian Peninsula on many levels: not only political and administrative, but also cultural. As we will see in the next chapter, the two branches of the family would be united in 1469 with the marriage of the *infant* Ferran (Fernando) of Aragon and the *infanta* Isabel of Castile, who would eventually become known as the "Catholic Kings." By this point, Eiximenis's works and ideas had already made their way to Castile; but it was during the reign of Isabel and Fernando that they would become established models of virtue, devotion, and comportment there.

137. ACA: CR, Reg. 2697, f. 119r (13 January 1452).

Chapter 4

Found in Translation

Isabel the Catholic Reads Eiximenis (Castile, c. 1490–1516)

> As it says in Scripture, there is no greater wickedness in the world than the wickedness of Woman; for all of the reasons explained in the present chapter, it is clear that our mother, Eve, was punished greatly for her sin in her person, and that she left great sufferings, and many evils for her daughters, on account of which, it can be seen that women, because of their nature, are the source of so many and such dangerous ills due to the sin committed by the first woman.
>
> Francesc Eiximenis, *Libro de las donas* (BRME: Ms. h-III-14, f. 23r)

Isabel the Catholic and Maria de Luna had many things in common, not least the influence of Francesc Eiximenis; but there are also many parallels between Isabel and the early modern queens who followed her. As the rich historiographical tradition surrounding her attests, Isabel I, queen of Castile (r. 1474–1504), offers a tremendously interesting example of female rulership in the late medieval period and was a highly controversial woman ruler in her own time. Although Isabel's case is not as extreme as that of Elizabeth I—who ruled England and Wales alone and unmarried a century later, and whose very physiology and gender identity came to be the target of gossip and pamphleteering—the controversies that surrounded each related to fundamental questions concerning feminine political power at the time. For example, can a woman embody the masculine qualities seen as the prerequisite for political rule?[1] And, to what extent can the power inherent in a woman's social rank compensate for the lower status she is accorded as a consequence of her gender?

Those who defended women's capacity to rule tended to see gender in a performative light. For them women could acquire the minimal masculine

1. Wiesner-Hanks, "Gender Theory," 18.

attributes necessary for rule through prudent counsel. Effectively, women rulers would need to suppress certain aspects of their femininity, becoming almost androgynous, as in the case of Elizabeth. But Isabel of Castile was in many ways closer to Maria de Luna than to the English queen, who remained a single woman and a reputed virgin her entire life. Isabel and Maria used similar strategies to rule as women without transgressing the delicate sensibilities of patriarchal society—a talent they acquired in part thanks to the guidance of writers like Eiximenis, who constructed a framework for their authority and reinforced their legitimacy. In this respect, as in others, Isabel's resources were superior to Maria's—the Castilian queen had a whole court full of writers at her disposal ready to offer advice, both solicited and unsolicited. Isabel also used the same strategies of formally contrived modesty as Maria had in her correspondence, as can be seen in the letters she wrote to her confessor and adviser, Hernando de Talavera. In one missive she began: "I dare to write like this having so little time to write, mixing things up in such a way that I seem to know far less than I would seem to know if I had more time, and I leave out many things I wish to say, and what I do say, I say very rather confusedly; and this bothers me, since if I had time, undoubtedly, there would be no pastime in which I would entertain myself more."[2] In many ways Isabel's relationship with Talavera (who was an admirer of Eiximenis) mirrored that of Maria de Luna with Eiximenis.

Little would the Franciscan have imagined, however, that his works would become so popular and influential a century after his death and beyond, or that they would be copied, translated, adapted, and expanded for later readers in an effort to resolve the same problems and issues that he had confronted. Texts, once written, have a life of their own. Eiximenis could never have imagined how radically the Iberian Peninsula in which he lived would be transformed by the dynastic dynamics that would be set into motion shortly after his death—or that the resulting reconfiguration of the kingdoms of the peninsula would be the catalyst for the dissemination of his works. Because of Maria de Luna and Martí I's failure to produce a surviving, legitimate heir, in 1412 the Crown of Aragon was granted to Fernando de Antequera, a member of the Trastámara family—the same illegitimate, regicidal cadet dynasty that Pere the Ceremonious had helped install in Castile.[3] In 1469 the grip of the Trastámaras on Castile and Aragon was intensified when the two

2. Clemencín, *Elogio de la reina católica,* 373. In this letter she is justifying a celebration to honor the French ambassadors that took place in Barcelona in 1493. See an analysis of the letter in Weissberger, "*Me atrevo.*"

3. See above, chapter 2.

branches of the family were united by the marriage of Isabel of Castile to Fernando (Ferran) of Aragon—a consanguineous union that required papal dispensation. The reign of Isabel and Fernando, who would eventually be honored by the sobriquet the "Catholic Kings," has traditionally been seen as a fundamental turning point in the history of Spain. In the established chronology, 1492—the year they conquered Muslim Granada, expelled the Jews of their kingdoms, and dispatched Columbus to the Indies—is regarded by some as marking the end of the Middle Ages. And it was during their reign that the work of Eiximenis was reevaluated and reshaped by Castilian writers for a Castilian audience.

But not all of Eiximenis's works were translated into Castilian or printed in Castile—only those that resonated with the particular atmosphere of religious reform and spirituality that emerged in the fifteenth century and therefore captured the interest of the clerics of the time. In fact, *Lo Crestià,* Eiximenis's encyclopedic summa of Christian devotion, was all but ignored and forgotten. The *Llibre de les dones,* on the other hand, was translated into Spanish and copied many times, both in its entirety and in excerpted or abridged form; however, it circulated only in manuscript form until it was finally printed in 1542. As for the *Scala Dei,* it disappeared in name, but was incorporated into a very successful new book, the *Ejercitatorio de la vida espiritual* (*Exercises for a Spiritual Life*). This was the work of the Benedictine monk García de Cisneros, cousin of the Catholic Kings' éminence grise, Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros. As abbot of Montserrat, García would have had full access to the local literary tradition, and he freely adapted Eiximenis's work without citation or credit. The *Llibre dels àngels* (*Book of Angels*) was even more successful, and was printed in Spanish on three occasions: in Burgos in 1490 and 1517, and in Alcalá in 1527. The work that made the greatest impression on Eiximenis's Castilian readers was his *Vita Christi*—in fact, it was chosen to be the first book to be produced on the printing press that the Catholic Kings established in Granada in 1496, although only the first of the two planned volumes was printed.[4] It constituted a sort of literary-religious celebration volume of the new Christian age ushered in by Fernando and

4. Ishikawa, "Hernando de Talavera," 73. Robinson notes that the Hieronymite Fray Gonzalo de Ocaña translated Eiximenis's *Vita Christi* in the 1430s, and that his text would have served as a base for Talavera's translation. It seems that only partial translations have been preserved. See also Calveras Santacana, "Fray Gonzalo de Ocaña"; and Millares Carlo, "Fray Gonzalo." For his part, Puig i Oliver has studied the interpolation of fragments of Eiximenis's *Vita Christi* into three Castilian translations of the *Flos sanctorum* that used the same version that was the base for Talavera's revised text. Puig i Oliver, "La *Vida de Crist,*" 93 and 114.

Isabel's culmination of the "Reconquista," as well as being a symbol of, if not a possible tool for, the evangelization of the kingdom's Muslim population.

Hernando de Talavera, Hieronymite monk, confessor to Queen Isabel, and first archbishop of Granada, was behind the project. He not only had the text translated into Castilian but edited and expanded it. In the introduction he described his motivation, in third person: "Moved by the sole desire that this book—so devout and so profitable—might easily be possessed by all Castilians . . . he had it published with great effort, and with much deliberation, and still more expense, and he corrected it and emended it . . . and added some things."[5] So impressed was Talavera by the oeuvre of the Catalan Franciscan that he placed it in terms of importance alongside the Gospels and the other books of the New Testament, and the works of authorities such as Bonaventure, Gregory the Great, Jerome, and Bernard. So he says in the treatise *De cómo han de vivir las monjas de san Bernardo en sus monasterios de Ávila* (*Regarding How the Nuns of Saint Bernard Ought to Live in Their Monasteries in Ávila*). Here, he recommends that the nuns read works including the *Vita Christi,* the *Natura angélica,* and the *Libro de las donas,* not in the original Catalan, but in Castilian translation, to ensure that they fully understand the text.[6] But it was not just Talavera who was so taken by Eiximenis. The even more influential and powerful Cardinal Cisneros, who succeeded Talavera both as archbishop of Granada and Isabel's confessor, and who shared his predecessor's passion for church reform and the inculcation of lay piety through devotional reading, championed ideas like those of Eiximenis. In other words, Eiximenis's works (or at least some of them) were translated into Castilian (or retranslated in some cases) because they captured the imagination of Spanish grandees, courtiers, and the royal couple—or at least of Isabel, who was the one who requested a copy in Spanish of the *Llibre de les dones,* and the one who kept copies of Eiximenis's works in her library.

Nevertheless, the particular attraction of Eiximenis in Castile must be accounted for. Why was it that some influential fifteenth-century Castilians had an interest in translating his text? Why had he not been forgotten, like many other medieval authors who never made the crucial transition from manuscript to printed book or, for that matter, were never translated? What did he have to offer to this new readership? And how were those texts understood in Castile once the context that produced and conditioned them

5. Hernando de Talavera, *Vita Christi,* BNE: Inc. 1126, f. 2r–v.

6. Cited by Ruiz García, who also identifies the works. See Ruiz García, "Prácticas de lectura." A copy of the manuscript can by found in BRME: Ms. a.IV.29, partially edited by González Hernández, "Fray Hernando," 157, and edited by Codet, "Edición de la *Suma,*" 1–57.

had been forgotten, and both Countess Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós and Queen Maria de Luna were little more than shadows of a distant past? This chapter seeks to respond to questions such as these by digging into the complex politics and court culture of the long reign of the Catholic Kings (1474–1516), taking into account the networks of writers, courtiers, and texts that they promoted, the languages in which those works were written, and the policies that the rulers promoted. It will also explore the role of ethno-linguistic identity at court, and the tension and negotiation—in particular, among Catalans, Aragonese, and Castilians—that took place after the dynastic union that was cemented by the marriage of Isabel and Fernando. Through all of this, this chapter aims to show how Eiximenis's works came to Castile, why Isabel the Catholic would want a copy of the *Book of Women,* and how Cisneros adapted and reshaped the *Scala Dei,* or *Book of Queen Maria,* as a seminal text in pre-reform Castile.

The Long Reign of the Catholic Kings (1474–1516)

The defining moment of Isabel and Fernando's lives and careers was their marriage, which took place on 19 October 1469.[7] Isabel was then an eighteen-year-old princess, threatened with arrest by her brother, Enrique IV of Castile (1454–74). Indeed, she was able to attend the ceremony only in secret, because her partisans in the Castilian court had spirited her away. Fernando, the bridegroom, was seventeen. The previous year he had been crowned king of Sicily, and he was also heir to the throne of the Crown of Aragon.[8] Like many aristocratic couples, Fernando and Isabel fell within the prohibited degrees of consanguinity. Both were members of the Trastámara family, and shared a common set of great-grandparents. As close blood relatives, their union required a papal bull, but there was no way that one could arrive in time for the nuptials, so they produced a forgery.

7. Isabel the Catholic has been the object of many studies of different types and scope. The most interesting biographies of Isabel are the following: Azcona, *Isabel la Católica;* Liss, *Isabel the Queen;* Rubin, *Isabella of Castile;* and Val Valdivieso, *Isabel I de Castilla*. Among the most engaging studies concerning Isabel and her world are Weissberger's *Isabel Rules* and *Queen Isabel I of Castile;* Guardiola-Griffiths, *Legitimizing the Queen;* Boruchoff, *Isabel la Católica;* Fernández de Córdova Miralles, *La corte de Isabel I;* and Ruiz García, *Los libros.*

8. Two other possible candidates for Isabel's hand were Charles of Valois (the son of Charles VII of France) and Afonso V of Portugal. The first choice would have reinvigorated the old Franco-Castilian alliance (traditionally Castile had tended to ally with France, and Aragon with England), whereas the latter option would have tightened relations with Portugal (although since Afonso already had a successor, it would not have brought about a dynastic union of the two kingdoms).

However, the grounds on which the marriage would be challenged were not religious, but political. Isabel's half brother, Enrique IV, was determined to see his own daughter, Juana, succeed him on the throne, but rebellious Castilian magnates supported Isabel as a counterclaimant. The grounds of their resistance was the accusation—difficult to prove, but also to refute—that Juana was, in fact, not the daughter of Enrique, but rather of his favorite, Beltrán de la Cueva, whom they considered an outsider and a parvenu.[9] This was fed by rumors of Enrique's impotence and his reputation for effeminacy, and Juana came to be known derisively as "La Beltraneja." So effective was this smear campaign that chroniclers and travelers in late fifteenth-century Castile recounted the accusation with salacious delight.[10]

Juana, however, was not out of the game, particularly as she herself had married Afonso V of Portugal; and he was determined to defend her (and his) claim to the throne of Castile. With the death of Enrique IV in 1474, civil war became inevitable. In the event, Isabel's supporters triumphed and, after a failed invasion and defeat at the battle of Toro in 1476, Afonso eventually gave up his claim. Even before the war was over, however, on 15 January 1475 Isabel and Fernando had signed the Concord of Segovia, a sort of "prenup" that established their respective roles in the government of each other's kingdoms and secured Isabel's personal sovereignty over Castile. Even after the agreement was amended by later modifications, the queen's position as monarch, and Fernando's subsidiary rank as king de jure, were confirmed by the provision that should Isabel predecease her husband, the crown would pass to her heir rather than to Fernando.

Fernando and Isabel had a total of five offspring who survived childbirth. The first, Isabel (1470–98), was married first to Afonso, crown prince of Portugal, and subsequently to his cousin, King Manuel I (1495–1521). A son, Juan (1478–97), was their second born, followed by Juana (1479–1555), Maria (1482–1517)—who would marry her sister's widower, Manuel—and Catalina (1485–1536)—Henry VIII's "Catherine of Aragon." With the birth of Juan, Isabel had discharged her most important duty as queen—she had produced an heir to her realms. As it was, she had produced no shortage of heirs for Castile, which allowed female succession, but the birth of Juan

9. Villarroel González, *Juana la Beltraneja,* 247–53.

10. Travelers like Hieronymus Münzer (c. 1437–1508), a German who visited Castile in the last decade of the fifteenth century, reported the rumors regarding Enrique IV's sexual dysfunction. See Münzer, "Itinerarium Hispanicum," 125–26; and Münzer, *Viaje por España,* 263. As Guardiola-Griffiths has shown, Isabel needed to legitimize her position as the rightful successor of her brother, and she used literature to denigrate him and embellish her own image. See Guardiola-Griffiths, *Legitimizing the Queen,* 45–68; and Liss, *Isabel the Queen,* 117.

appeared to secure the future of the Trastámara House in Aragon. It may seem somewhat ironic, considering her reproductive capacity, but in their enthusiasm and relief, her supporters held her up as an image of the Virgin Mary, the Queen of Heaven, and sought in Juan parallels with the birth of Christ.[11] In the face of the great support in Castile for Isabel and her son, and in the face of military and diplomatic failure, Afonso and Juana signed a peace treaty with their former enemy. The agreement, signed in 1479 at Alcáçovas, marked the end of six years of war and aristocratic unrest in Castile. Juana la Beltraneja's fate, however, was far from happy. Soon after, she was imprisoned in the Clarissan convent in Coimbra, eventually regaining her freedom (c. 1496), after which she settled in Lisbon, where she died in 1530.[12] Isabel and Fernando's party had won, and Isabel would go on to become the most famous and praised female Spanish ruler of all time.[13]

The same year that the Treaty of Alcáçovas was concluded, Joan II of Aragon died, and Fernando inherited the Crown from his father in his own right. Two years later, on 14 April 1481, Fernando signed a document in reciprocation for the Concord of Segovia, in which Isabel was designated coruler of all the kingdoms of the Crown of Aragon—a sort of lieutenant general of the realms. Presaging the panegyrical tradition in which she would be featured over the course of her career, she is presented in the charter as prudent, wise, virtuous, and experienced.[14] For all of that, Fernando was well aware of the relative power and prestige of their two patrimonies, and in his charters, including the declaration of 1481, he always signed first as "King of Castile," appending his own inherited titles afterward.

The result of their marriage was, in effect, a true partnership of rule. Isabel was not an ancillary of her husband, as in the case of Maria de Luna and Martí I, or Maria de Castilla and Alfons the Magnanimous of Aragon; rather, she was sovereign in her own right of Castile—a kingdom more populous and dynamic than Fernando's realms. As a consequence, Isabel was a ruling queen who governed along with her husband, and both were responsible for the policies that were undertaken in their realms—often independently and at times at cross-purposes. Their motto, *Tanto monta, monta tanto, Isabel como Fernando* (Isabel and Fernando, they amount to the same), reflects the balance

11. Liss, *Isabel the Queen,* 157–61; Lehfeldt, "Ruling Sexuality"; and Weissberger, *Isabel Rules,* 112–24.

12. See Azcona, *Juana de Castilla,* 207–26.

13. Regarding the construction of Isabel's historical image, see Marino, "Inventing the Catholic Queen."

14. Antonio de la Torre y del Cerro edited the document in "Isabel la Católica," 423–28. The original document is at the Archive of Simancas: Patronato Real, leg. 21, f. 1 (n. 2580, catalogue 5).

of power that characterized their relationship.[15] Indeed, their chronicler, Hernando del Pulgar, described them as "a single will that inhabited two bodies" (probably following Aristotle's definition of love as "a single soul inhabiting two bodies").[16] That said, by virtue of his gender, Fernando certainly took a larger role in Castile than Isabel ever did in the Crown of Aragon. The kingdom needed a masculine royal presence, as reflected in the king's larger profile in terms of the military and diplomacy. Notwithstanding this gendered aspect of their relationship, the rule of Isabel and Fernando clearly challenged common assumptions regarding the nature of the medieval monarchy, and provides further evidence that rulership and kingship were not synonymous, and that while monarchical power may have usually centered on a king, it was shared by other members of his family—most clearly, the queen.[17]

Isabel and Fernando embarked on a dynastic union in the hope that their future heir would reign over both Crowns, and in order to bolster the power of royal authority, especially in Castile. As part of their political project they supported the ecclesiastical reform that was clearly needed to repair the obviously decadent church, and its famously dissolute monastic culture. One of the key reforms they embarked on was Eiximenis's own mission: the support of Observant Franciscanism.[18] They also created the Spanish Inquisition (1478–80)—a tribunal composed of clerics, but closely dependent on the monarchy—the goal of which was to assure the purity of Christian belief in their realms. At the beginning, the Inquisition's main purpose was to root out false converts and Judaizers within Spain's substantial *converso* community. However, by the sixteenth century its targets had expanded to include crypto-Muslim Moriscos (forced converts from Islam), Protestants, radical church reformers, and heterodox mystical groups (notably the Alumbrados), as well as individuals accused of sodomy (including not only homosexuality, but any illicit sexual acts or violations of gender norms), bigamy, priestly debauchery, blasphemy, and sorcery. The Catholic Kings' determination to pursue their religious policies was demonstrated most famously on 31 March 1492, when they published the "Edict of Expulsion," the decree that gave the Jews of their kingdoms four months to either convert to Christianity or go

15. For a discussion of the meaning of this motto and the symbols associated with Isabel and Ferdinand, see Weissberger, *Isabel Rules,* 51–52; Guardiola-Griffiths, *Legitimizing the Queen,* 16; and González Iglesias, "El humanista y los príncipes."

16. Pérez, "Isabel la Católica," 155.

17. See, for example, Earenfight's study of Maria of Castile, and the author's work on Maria de Luna: Earenfight, "Without the Persona," 1–21; and Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage.*

18. García Oro, *La reforma;* García Oro, *Cisneros y la reforma,* 17–30 and 171–270; García Oro, *Cisneros;* and García-Villoslada, *Historia de la Iglesia,* 3–1:253–63.

into exile. Although many chose to stay, these *conversos* faced discrimination and marginalization on the grounds of their race, expressed in terms of the "impure blood" of these "New Christians."[19]

But these were only some of the transformative events that characterized their reign. Isabel and Fernando also sponsored Columbus's voyage to "the Indies," the result of which was the conquest and colonization of the Americas, and the subjugation and conversion (and in some cases, extinction) of indigenous peoples. In addition, they concluded the so-called Reconquista—idealized as the recovery of the Christian lands of the Visigoths that had been lost to the Muslims in the eighth century. In 1492 they accepted the surrender of Granada, the capital of the last Muslim kingdom in the peninsula, and in the long aftermath, they would order the Muslims of that region to convert to Christianity.[20] Such were their triumphs that in 1496 the controversial pope, Alexander VI (r. 1492–1503), scion of the powerful Aragonese-Valencian Borja family, granted the royal couple the title "the Catholic Kings" in his bull "Si convenit" (19 December 1496).[21] With all of this, it is no wonder that the reign of Isabel and Fernando and their policies and programs—so far-reaching and fundamental to the historical transformation of Spain and the transition out of the Middle Ages—have been the subject of such sustained and intense scholarly scrutiny.[22]

However, less well known but no less important were their cultural initiatives. Their court was the locus for the maturation of humanism in the Iberia Peninsula—the culmination of a process that was already well under way under the patronage of Isabel's father, Juan II.[23] This humanism, and the revival of classical learning that it involved, gave rise to a more systematic teaching method, the *studia humanitatis,* among many other innovations. It was this method that Isabel and Fernando would use to educate their own children—their four daughters, Maria, Isabel, Juana, and Catalina, and their son, Juan.[24]

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19. The first statute relating to *limpieza de sangre* (blood purity) came as early as 5 June 1449, when New Christians were barred from holding municipal offices. See Pérez, *History of a Tragedy,* 54.

20. For overviews of their reigns, see Edwards, *The Spain of the Catholic Monarchs;* Nieto Soria, *Orígenes de la monarquía,* 113–31.

21. Saraiva, *The Marrano Factory,* xxxiv.

22. See, for instance, Edwards, *The Spain of the Catholic Monarchs;* Kamen, *Empire,* and *The Spanish Inquisition;* Casey, *Early Modern Spain;* Ruiz, *Spanish Society;* and Ladero Quesada, *Los Reyes Católicos.*

23. Lawrence, "Humanism in the Iberian Peninsula," 223; Silleras-Fernandez, "Paradoxes humanistes," 156; González Rolán and Saquero Suárez-Somonte, "El Humanismo," 115–50.

24. Torre y del Cerro, "Maestros de los hijos."

Moreover, this was only one dimension of Queen Isabel's activities as a patron of culture—activities that cannot be separated from her politics. She amassed sizable collections of paintings and tapestries (around 370 are documented), and a comprehensive collection of books that included many luxuriously decorated manuscripts.[25] She patronized authors and commissioned texts, both original works and translations, with a preference for the historical genre (including works on her own reign), conduct literature, and doctrinal works relating to the renewed spirituality that characterized this period.[26] Naturally, she put in a great deal of effort and devoted considerable resources to the foundation and endowment of monastic houses, and worked to ensure that existing communities maintained a rigorous observation of their rules. In the newly conquered and formerly Muslim Kingdom of Granada, for example, it was necessary to quickly build up an ecclesiastical infrastructure from scratch. All of this served to enhance Isabel's *bona fama*—her reputation as a pious woman—and, therefore, her ability to command and control in a society where gender roles where both very clear-cut and very much performative in nature. Through this broad program of pious patronage, she exhibited a marked predilection for Observant Franciscans. In her will alone she commissioned no fewer than 20,000 requiem masses from Observant houses for the benefit of her soul, a sum that represented a considerable infusion of capital into these convents.[27]

Isabel and Fernando's reign also coincided with the development of movable type and the dissemination of the printing press—the first surviving book printed in Iberia was the *Sinodal de Aguilafuente,* published on behalf of the bishop of Segovia in June 1472.[28] In fact, the Catholic Kings supported printing and printers from the time they came to power, granting them tax incentives to set up establishments, while exercising informal control over the material they published.[29] Eventually, in 1502 they decreed that no text could be printed without the approval of both the Crown and ecclesiastical authorities, although it would not be until 1551, during the reign of their grandson, that an Index of Prohibited Books was established.[30] Eiximenis had also benefited from a sort of revolution in publishing during his lifetime—in his case, the standardization of Gothic cursive in the first half of

25. Sánchez Cantón, *Libros, tapices y cuadros,* 7–63.

26. Salvador Miguel, "Isabel la Católica."

27. From Isabel's will, f. 2, ed. Torre y del Cerro, *Testamentaría,* 65.

28. Wilkinson, *Iberian Books,* xiv.

29. Liss, *Isabel the Queen,* 370; Ruiz García, *Los libros,* 302–3; Martín Abad, "Los Reyes Católicos," 17–19; Ruiz García, "El poder de la escritura," 299–303; and Nieto Soria, "Los instrumentos."

30. Peters, *Inquisition,* 96.

the fourteenth century, which established a calligraphic hand that was not only easier to read than its predecessors, but also better suited to systematic copying.[31] It was this development that accounts for the remarkable dissemination of Eiximenis's manuscripts, along with those of other prolific writers of his time, including Jean Gerson, Nicolas of Cusa, Gilles Bellemère, and Denis the Carthusian.[32]

Needless to say, the introduction of the printing press had repercussions far more dramatic than those witnessed by Eiximenis. Printing spread like wildfire: by 1500 there were no fewer than twenty-five towns with printing presses in the Iberian Peninsula, publishing mostly in the vernacular.[33] By that year some 20 million books had been printed in Europe, marking the beginning of what Walter Benjamin called the "age of mechanical reproduction."[34] This ushered in an era of literary mass consumption and standardization in the first half of the sixteenth century—one that the Catholic Kings and their successors did not immediately react to, even if, as Dorothy Sherman Severin suggests, they were aware of the propagandistic value of the printing press.[35] In any case, what in the Middle Ages had constituted a rather closed and elitist network of readers, who exchanged valuable and rare manuscripts, or dispatched authors and musicians from one court to another, became a much broader class of literary consumers, thanks to the printing press and the increasing availability of paper.[36] With the growing dominance of incunabula over manuscripts, networks of readers expanded exponentially; moreover, these readers were also book buyers and owners. Books became cheaper, were copied more quickly, and their channels of distribution extended both geographically and socially. This prompted an emerging awareness and concern on the part of authors that broader exposure and dissemination were not without their risks—they undermined one's control over one's own work. Thus, literary production became detached from authorship, as editors and censors came to exercise unprecedented power over the shape and context of texts.

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31. Saenger, "Silent Reading," 387.

32. Ibid., 387 n. 111.

33. Ruiz García, *Los libros,* 218–27; and Delbrugge, *A Scholarly Edition,* 7–8.

34. Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 37. He estimates a population of 100 million for that period (see Febvre and Martin, *The Coming of the Book,* 248–49). Wilkinson states that before 1601 more than 2,000 books had been produced at Salamanca, approximately 1,000 titles each at Seville, Valencia, Alcalá de Henares, Madrid, Zaragoza, and Barcelona, and more than 500 items each at Burgos, Lisbon, Toledo, and Valladolid. See Wilkinson, "Exploring the Print World," 497.

35. Severin, *Del manuscrito a la imprenta,* 1 and 3.

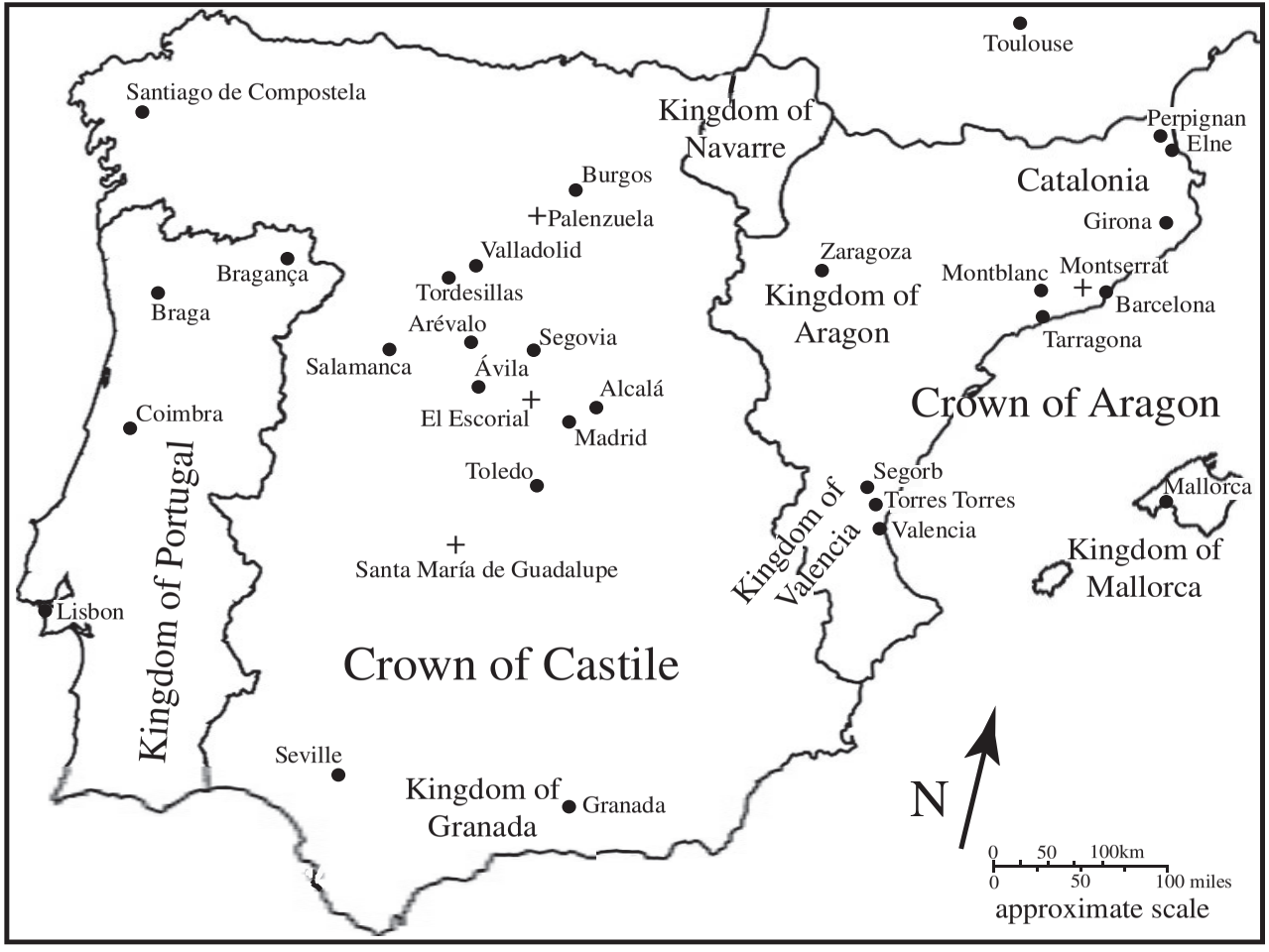
36. See chapter 1 above.

The anxieties this could provoke can be seen in Castiglione's reaction to the publication of his *Il cortegiano* (*The Book of the Courtier*). This manual of courtesy, first published in 1528 (but written twenty years earlier), became a runaway success, and was translated and published all over Europe. As Castiglione himself said in the dedication to Miguel de Silva, bishop of Viseu, "It seemed likely that someone might try to have it printed. Alarmed by this peril, then, I resolved to revise the book at once so far as I had time, with intent to publish it; for I thought better to let it be seen imperfectly corrected by my own hand than grievously mutilated by other hands."[37] Indeed, Severin has documented the same concerns among Castilian authors of the sentimental novels that were popular as courtly entertainment, including the works of Diego de San Pedro and Juan de Flores—authors who added interpolations to some of their works before they were printed for a more general readership. For instance, in his novel *Arnalte and Lucenda* (1491), San Pedro added a *planctus,* "The Seven Agonies of Virgin Mary," and a panegyric poem in praise of Queen Isabel, whose patronage he was seeking.[38] This new community of fellow readers, connected by printing, is a manifestation of what Benedict Anderson called "the embryo of a nationally imagined community."[39] And Eiximenis became part of this community posthumously, as his books were printed, read, edited, and disseminated in a very different cultural and historical context than that which saw their initial production.

Negotiating Courtly Identity: The Crown of Aragon in Castile

Of course, the introduction of Eiximenis's oeuvre to Castile was not the only innovation that contributed to the cultural and political developments in the court of the Catholic Kings, nor was it the only element taken from the culturally Catalan Crown of Aragon. Foremost among these was the royal lieutenancy, the office of *lloctinent*—an individual who "takes the place" of the king's person and embodies his full authority. This post was created by Jaume I (1213–76), as a means of providing an intermediary step toward kingship for his sons, and of reinforcing his authority in Mallorca and Valencia—the new, geographically dispersed and institutionally autonomous kingdoms he had added to the Crown of Aragon. Over the following century and a half,

37. Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier,* 1.
38. Severin, *Del manuscrito a la imprenta,* 2 and 6.
39. Anderson, *Imagined Communities,* 44.



The Iberian Peninsula, ca. 1500. Copyright © Nuria Silleras-Fernandez, 2014.

as the Crown added more territories across the Mediterranean, including Sicily, Sardinia, and Naples, it became all the more important for the king to effectively delegate his authority, and, in effect, his person. This was a crucial development; it was as a consequence of Fernando the Catholic's ability to rule his own territories through the medium of lieutenants that he was able to relocate to Castile after his marriage to Isabel—a move that was, in turn, indispensable for their political and military projects.[40] Subsequently, the office would be adopted by Carlos V, who changed the title to "regent," or the slightly less prestigious "viceroy," as means of ruling his even more far-flung empire.

Faced with a shortage of legitimate male heirs in the 1300s, the kings of Aragon had taken to appointing their queens as lieutenants; Carlos V both adopted and expanded this policy by appointing female members of the royal family to high-ranking positions in his kingdoms, including viceroy, lieutenant, and regent.[41] The fact that Fernando's own mother, Juana Enríquez, had acted as lieutenant of Catalonia on his behalf during his minority (1461–68) must have had an impact on the young prince, who thereby learned at an early age that women could be effectively involved in positions of command in government.[42] By the time he married Isabel and moved to Castile, his septuagenarian father, Joan II (1458–79), who ruled Fernando's future realm, the Crown of Aragon, was being assisted by his sister, Joana (later, queen of Naples), who also held the post of lieutenant.[43] This is probably why Fernando felt less anxiety than his male contemporaries might have about ruling with his wife, or taking on the "feminine" role of forsaking his own homeland and settling in the court of his wife, who remained "queen and owner of Castile" (*reina y propietaria de Castilla*)—a kingdom in which he was no more than royal consort.

Nor was the lieutenancy the only courtly tradition that Fernando brought to Castile, a kingdom that was underdeveloped in institutional terms, in

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40. Fernando appointed several lieutenants, including his "natural" (illegitimate) son, Alonso de Aragón, archbishop of Zaragoza, who served as lieutenant of Aragon and of Naples (replacing the grand captain from 1507), as well as Enrique de Aragón, Count of Ampúries and Duke of Segorb, and Juan de Lanuza, the *justicia* of Aragon. See Vicens Vives, "Precendentes mediterráneos," 3.

41. See chapter 3 and the conclusion; also Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 7–9; Vicens Vives, "Precedentes mediterráneos," 10–11 and 18; Lalinde Abadía, "Virreyes y lugartenientes," 168–69; and Lalinde Abadía, "La institución virreinal," 159–63.

42. Earenfight, "Two Bodies, One Spirit"; Lalinde Abadía, "Virreyes y lugartenientes," 111. Juana Enríquez was lieutenant of Catalonia (1461–68) and tutor to her son and heir, Ferran II, later "the Catholic." See Coll Julià, *Doña Juana Enríquez,* 1:134.

43. For instance, see an example of Joana's role as lieutenant while at the court of Perpignan-Barcelona of 1473–79. *Cortes de los antiguos reinos,* XXVI:468 and 497.

comparison to the Crown of Aragon. Other traditions included charitable rites that had been laid out in Pere the Ceremonious's palatine manual, the *Ordinacions,* which had established the Aragonese protocols of court in 1344. Notable among these were the monarchs' paschal custom of washing the feet of seven poor people, who also received clothes and food, and a similar ritual performed for nine poor ladies on the occasion of the feast of the Virgin in March.[44] Isabel the Catholic took up these practices in 1494, undoubtedly under the influence of Fernando; indeed, she possessed a copy of the *Ordinacions* in her library.[45] Her husband's inspiration notwithstanding, ceremonies of this type would have appealed to the queen, because she evidently enjoyed celebrating liturgical holidays, and was known to be generous with her pious donations.[46]

However, the greatest impact that Catalan and Catalans had on the court of Castile was undoubtedly in the field of literature. In addition to figures such as Eiximenis, Ramon Llull, whose works were admired and promoted by Cardinal Cisneros, and Ausiàs March, who wrote in Catalan, Pere Torroella (c. 1420–92) also wrote in Castilian, and Enrique de Villena (1384–1424) had translated his own works from Catalan into Castilian.[47] Villena, and others, such as Íñigo López de Mendoza (1398–1458), Marquis of Santillana, were able to move back and forth between the Trastámara courts of Aragon and Castile.[48] Moreover, the list of Catalan authors who successfully made the transition to the Castilian court and the Castilian language included Mossèn Avinyó, Simon Pastor, Joan de Masdovelles, Pere Torroella, Romeu Llull, Moner, Fracesc Carrós, Pardo de la Casta, Francí de Castellví, Narcís Vinyoles, Jaume Gassull, Jeroni d'Artés, Bernat Fenollar, Joan Escrivà, Jordi Centelles, Joan Boscà, and Jaume d'Olesa, to name but a few.[49] The most famous of these was Boscà (Juan Boscán), a friend of Garcilaso de la Vega, who also served in Fernando's court. This process of cultural *translatio*

44. Fernández de Córdova Miralles, *La corte de Isabel I,* 281; and Azcona, *Isabel la Católica,* 387. See also Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 119–22 for a comparative case in Maria de Luna and her pious rituals; and Domínguez Casas, "La corte y la imagen real," 93–95.

45. Palacios, "Sobre la redacción," 666; Fernández de Córdova Miralles, *La corte de Isabel I,* 88.

46. Muñoz Fernández, "Notas para la definición," 422. Earlier on, at the end of the fourteenth century, King Martí the Young, the son of Martí I and Maria de Luna, had brought this same custom to Sicily. See Silleras-Fernandez, "Negocios familiares," 517. These rituals were also practiced by the Trastámaras in Aragon, including Maria de Castilla. See Soldevila, "La Reyna Maria," 274.

47. Pérez, *Cisneros,* 249–51; Riera, "Catàleg d'obres," 699–710.

48. Rubió i Balaguer, "Sobre la cultura," 300. For a comparison of Mendoza and Eiximenis, see Rodríguez Puértolas, "Eiximenis y Mendoza," 171–209. The Marquis of Santillana also had Eiximenis's *Natura angélica* and the *Doctrina compendiosa* in his library. See Rojas Fernández, "El *Llibre del àngels,*" 466.

49. See Riquer, *Història,* 3:578; and García Cárcel, "Fernando el Católico y Cataluña," 370.

served not only these Catalan authors, who thereby found new audiences and patrons, but also Fernando himself, who, through this medium, was able to exercise influence in the foreign court in which he found himself serving as king consort.

Fernando and Isabel's situation constituted, in effect, a sort of medieval gender-bending, and is rooted in the very specific circumstances of their personae and their realms. Few kingdoms in the Middle Ages were comfortable with the notion of female succession, and even in those that allowed for it—such as Castile—it was seen as an option to be exercised only if there were no direct male heirs available. This was not the case in Aragon, where, although female succession had not been proscribed by law, as in France, custom and tradition mitigated against it with such force as to render it moot.[50] The typical scenario in Latin Europe was that a kingdom would be passed on to the son (or nearest male descendant) of the previous king, and that he would marry a noblewoman (almost certainly of foreign extraction), and she would abandon the land of her birth to take her place at her husband's side. As part of such a move, these foreign queen consorts carried with them some of the apparatus of their culture of origin, including books, art, intellectual currents, religious ideas and practices, and even people (in the form of the relations, courtiers, and servants)—all of which had an impact on the culture of their destination kingdom. Certainly, these women had an important role in building political alliances, as has long been recognized; but they also played a crucial role in the dissemination and development of culture (as noted above, in reference to Queen Violant de Bar in the Crown of Aragon).

However, in the case of the Catholic Kings, it was Fernando, the new husband, who performed this feminine role, because, for all intents and purposes, he moved from the Crown of Aragon to the Crown of Castile. On the one hand, the royal couple perceived of Castile as requiring particular political attention at that moment—faced with noble rebellion, invasion from Portugal, a resurgent Maghrib, and an ever less-manageable vassal state of Granada. But, it was also the richer and more populous of the two realms, and its status and wealth would increase dramatically in the wake of the conquest of the Kingdom of Granada in 1492 and, subsequently, with the establishment of colonies in the Americas. This is not to say, however, that Fernando abandoned the Crown of Aragon. He was ruler there (as well as in Naples) by his own right, and he and Isabel visited his lands on a number of occasions, such as when they were required to attend the *corts* (parliament) of Catalonia and Valencia and the *cortes* of Aragon, and when those same parliaments

50. García Gallo, "La sucesión del trono," 10.

were obliged to swear an oath of allegiance to their successor, the *infante* Juan. As it happened, Ferdinand was almost assassinated in Barcelona, when on 7 December 1492, a peasant named Joan de Canyamars (an individual described as "crazy" in the sources) attacked and injured the king. Ferdinand and Isabel's itinerant courts orbited through their peninsular realms, at times separately, and at times together.[51] It was only after Isabel's death in 1504, that Fernando—known to his Castilian subjects as "the Old Catalan" (El Viejo Catalán), began to spend more time in the Crown of Aragon, eventually found a new wife, the French noblewoman Germana de Foix, whom he married in 1505, and appointed her as his own lieutenant general there.[52] In other words, for the thirty-five years of the Catholic Kings' marriage, there was a tremendous Catalan presence in the Castilian court—a presence that took the form, first and foremost, of the king.

Certainly, Fernando was not the typical Catalano-Aragonese king of earlier times; he was the son of two Castilian parents, Joan II, who was already fourteen years old (an adult by the standards of the day) by the time his father, Fernando de Antequera, was elected king of Aragon in 1412, and Joan's second wife, Juana Enríquez, a Castilian noblewoman who was nineteen when she became queen of Aragon.[53] Thus, unlike his predecessors, Fernando the Catholic would have grown up not only bilingual in Catalan and Castilian, but also bicultural. Indeed, he was effectively multilingual, as there can be little doubt that he also spoke and read Aragonese—a language that was very close to both Catalan and Castilian, and enjoyed its own modest literary "Golden Age" in the fourteenth century.[54]

The dynasty that had ruled the Crown of Aragon since its inception until the ascent of Fernando de Antequera had been that of the Counts of Barcelona; the city was their primary capital and administrative center, and Catalan had long been established as the main language of court and official correspondence.[55] And it is in Barcelona that Fernando the Catholic would

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51. See Rumeu de Armas, *Itinerario de los Reyes Católicos,* particularly 37–38, 78, 82, 88, 95, 100, 156, 159, 196, 199, 220, 230, 282, 285, 289, 325, 328, and 410.

52. This marital agreement was part of the Treaty of Blois (12 October 1505). See Cruïlles, *Germana de Foix,* 89–93; and Faulí, *Germana de València,* 9 and 13.

53. Although the royal chancery kept operating in Catalan during their reign, Castilian had also been a language of the court from the time of the Trastámaras' takeover in 1412. Joan II and his wife Juana Enríquez, for example, preferred to exchange letters in Castilian. See two examples of letters sent by Joan II to Juana in Coll Julià, *Doña Juana Enríquez,* 2:244–47; ACA: CR, Reg. 3411, f. 33 (Calatayud, 9 November 1461); and ACA: CR, Reg. 3410, f. 178 (Calatayud, 10 November 1461).

54. The best example is Juan Fernández de Heredia (c. 1310–69). See Pérez Lashereas, *La literatura,* 129–31.

55. The chancery was regulated by Pere the Ceremonious in 1344 in his *Ordinacions;* some of his successors, among them Fernando himself, added supplements. In 1480 while in Toledo he ordered

have spent a significant portion of his childhood. In fact, during the prince's minority his mother, Juana Enríquez, served as his *tudriu* (tutor) and lieutenant of the Principality of Catalonia on his behalf.[56] Fernando was also in Catalonia during the civil war of 1462–72, when the Catalan estates rose up in arms against his father, and he was at his mother's side in Girona when the rebels besieged the city. In other words, Fernando grew up within two literary-cultural ambits: that of the Catalan of the Barcelona court and the local elite, and that of the Castilian of his parents and the Castilian courtiers they had brought with them.

The Politics of Language at Court

Such linguistic affinities notwithstanding, and despite the long literary tradition and tremendous administrative weight of Catalan, that language did not make the transition to Castile when Fernando became king and adopted Isabel's kingdom as his primary base of operations. Corresponding to the experience of his grandfather, Fernando de Antequera, who moved from Castile to Catalonia, the existing language of the court exercised too much power and influence to be dislodged by the foreign culture of an immigrant king. And if Catalan was unable to make such a leap, neither was the other regionally rooted language of the chancery of the Crown of Aragon—Aragonese. The Crown of Aragon was a diverse, multilingual space. Latin continued to be used for the most important official documents, while Catalan dominated the internal administration and correspondence of the court. Castilian was also used, as were Italian and French, although these tended to be limited to very specific contexts. Indeed, as Aragon's relations with Castile intensified after 1412, and the importance of Sicily and the Kingdom of Naples as constituents of the Crown grew, Castilian and Italian became ever more important. By this time, Arabic and Hebrew had declined in the Crown of Aragon as both literary and administrative languages; the former was used occasionally for diplomatic exchanges, and the latter for documents generated by local Jewish communities for their own consumption. Occitan,

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clauses appended to reduce fraud, disorder, and insubordination at court. See Torre y del Cerro, *Documentos sobre relaciones internacionales de los Reyes Católicos,* 1:452 and 449–61; ACA: Reg. 3218, ff. 22v-23r (Toledo, 31 January 1480).

56. Fernando faced many challenges in Catalonia. The principality was at war with Joan II from 1462 to 1472, and from 1463 the Catalan *corts* recognized Pedro, constable of Portugal (the grandson of the pretender, Jaume d'Urgell) as the rightful ruler, until his death in 1466 (see above, chapter 3). On 6 March 1365 Juana Enríquez was named lieutenant general of Catalonia. She moved to Valencia and subsequently to Tarragona in order to help coordinate the war efforts of the king against Catalonia. See Coll Juliá, *Doña Juana Enríquez,* 2:134 and 155.

which up to the fifteenth century had been the preferred language of Catalan poets, had also waned—a decline signaled by the work of Ausiàs March, who revolutionized Catalan literature by composing vernacular poetry, thus launching the "Golden Age" of Valencian literature.

However, because Fernando and Isabel's children were born and reared in Castile, they were educated in Castilian and Latin, but not in Catalan—even though Juan was the crown prince, and had he not died at age eighteen, he would have inherited both Crowns. By the same token, their grandson, the future Carlos V, who grew up in Flanders, would be taught neither Castilian nor Catalan, and took up the former only when he became king of the Spanish realms in 1516. Naturally, because Isabel did not reside in Catalonia or work with the Aragonese bureaucracy, she had no need to learn Catalan, although she must have spoken Portuguese, and her efforts to learn Latin as an adult are well documented.[57] She hired a tutor, Beatriz Galindo, or "La Latina," who was attached to her household from about 1482 and who figures among "the wise ladies" of her court.[58]

The power base of the Catholic Kings and the locus of their court would be Castile, and their language of administration, Castilian (Spanish). Indeed, one of the clauses of their marriage agreement specified that their children should be raised in Castile—a situation that provoked certain anxieties.[59] There had been much tension between the Aragonese and the Castilian branches of the Trastámara family over the course of the fifteenth century; Alfons the Magnanimous had even gone to war in Castile against Juan II and his *privado* (royal favorite), Álvaro de Luna, in favor of his own brothers, the *infantes de Aragón.* It was symptomatic of such tensions, that on 10 July 1478 Joan II of Aragon, then an old man of eighty, sent his son, Fernando, a letter in which he advised him to raise and educate any son he might have in the

57. Isabel's chronicler, Hernando del Pulgar, wrote to the queen: "I desire much to know how Your Highness is progressing with the Latin You are learning. Tell me Lady, because there is some Latin that is so indomitable that it cannot be understood even by those who devote much time to it—although I am confident in the intelligence of Your Highness, that if you put your mind to it, as difficult to bring to heel as it may be, you will tame it just as you have with other languages." *Letras de Fernando de Pulgar,* 151 (1482). Regarding Isabel's education and training, see Val Valdivieso, *Isabel la princesa,* 36–39; and Fernández-Álvarez, *Isabel la Católica,* 57.

58. Beatriz Galindo, Juana Contreras, and María Pacheco were some of those "wise ladies." See Segura Graíño, "Las sabias mujeres," 176. Galindo received a *quitación* (salary) of no less than 15,000 *maravedís* from 1497 to 1504—the amount that many of her female servants received. See González Marrero, "Las mujeres," 883. See also Muñoz Fernández, "Relaciones femeninas," 115–34; and Val Valdivieso, "Isabel la Católica."

59. See a partial translation of the document to English in Cowans, *Early Modern Spain,* 7–9 (doc. 1).

Crown of Aragon, rather than in Castile.[60] Had Fernando followed through, this would have provoked an abrogation of the marital treaty with Isabel, but in the end, Joan died a few months later, and the issue was never raised again. As it was, the children of the Catholic Kings received a top-rate education in the latest humanist fashion, and the *infantas* were praised for their excellent knowledge of Latin.[61] No less a figure than the renowned Joan Lluís Vives admired their knowledge and Latin skills: "People in various parts of the country tell me with words of praise and admiration that Queen Juana, wife of Philip and mother of our Emperor Charles, answered in Latin to the *ex tempore* speeches that are customarily delivered in Latin in every town in the presence of new princes. The English say the same of their queen Catherine, sister of Juana. All say the same of the other two sisters, who met their death in Portugal."[62]

The fundamentals of the relationship between power and language, and between literary language and language of court, can be seen in the words of two near-contemporary authors, Gonzalo García de Santa María (1447–1521) and Antonio de Nebrija (1441–1522). The first was a well-known Aragonese lawyer and author who was chosen by Fernando to compose a biography of his father, Joan II. Nebrija was a famous humanist who is best known for having composed the first Spanish grammar—a work he dedicated to Isabel the Catholic in 1492.[63] In the prologue of his *Las vidas de los santos religiosos* (*Lives of the Holy Saints*) or *Vitas Patrum* (*Lives of the Fathers*) García de Santa María explained that he had decided to write his book in Castilian, rather than Catalan, because Isabel and Fernando had chosen Castile rather than Catalonia as the center of their kingdoms. As he put it, "And just as in France, and in other lands, the best language of all is that of the court, and since the royal empire that we have today is Castilian, and the very excellent king and queen, our lords, have chosen the Kingdom of Castile as the seat and throne of all of their kingdoms, I decided to compose

60. The letter is preserved in a draft version that served as the basis for an encoded letter preserved at RAH: A-7, f. 237r–v, n. 682 (10 July 1478). The letter is written in Castilian.

61. As was customary for queens, Isabel took charge of her children's education, as can be seen in her account books. See Torre y del Cerro and Torre, *Cuentas de Gonzalo de Baeza,* I:ff. 59v (for example, "Al doctor fray Andrés, maestro de latyn, 4130 mrs."), 65–2v, 110v, 124v, 132–2, 140, 155v, 170, 172, 214–2, 232–2; II:ff. 69v, 81–2v, 100, 114–2v; 124, 139–2v; and Muñoz, "Notas para la definición," 428. The education of royal children also figured in Alfonso X's *Siete partidas.* See Alfonso X, *Las siete partidas,* II:title 7, law 3.

62. Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman,* 69–70.

63. See an analysis of both works and of the linguistic situation of this period in Lledó-Guillem, *Literatura o imperio,* 31–49. García de Santamaría's book was prohibited by the church's Index in 1559.

the present work in the Castilian language. Because language usually, more than other things, depends on empire."[64]

For his part, in the oft-quoted dedicatory prologue of his grammar, Nebrija explained to Isabel that the object of his work was to "streamline this, our Castilian language," and observed that "language has always been the handmaid of empire."[65] Nebrija also had a clear political objective in composing his grammar, one that he stated explicitly in the prologue, and which is all the more remarkable given that it was written before Columbus had reached the Americas, and five years before Prince Juan, Fernando and Isabel's only son and heir, had died:

> When I was asked by your highness [Queen Isabel] what use it could have, the very reverend father, the Bishop of Ávila [Hernando de Talavera] provided me with a response, and answering for me, said that Your Highness placed beneath her yoke many barbarous peoples and nations of foreign tongues, and after their conquest came the need to give them laws, as a victor imposes on the vanquished, and with [these laws] our Castilian language . . . and truly now it is not only the enemies of Our Faith who need to know the Castilian language, but also the Basques, French, Navarrese, Italians, and the others who have any dealings or communication in Spain, and have need of our language.[66]

Notably absent from the list of the various barbarous and foreign peoples who, Nebrija notes, should have the Castilian language taught to them are the Catalans, Valencians, and Mallorcans. Perhaps this was out of sensitivity to Fernando's own roots and those of his entourage who had relocated in Castile, but it was also probably a sign of the times. The linguistic and political ascendancy of Castilian was clear, and the authors who depended on patronage for their livelihood would also have been aware that in order to have a successful career, Castilian was the language to write in.

But if the Catalan language was left behind when Fernando made the move to Castile, Catalan literature was not; it made the transition, but in translation. Hence, thanks to the interest in Eiximenis's ideas on the part of

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64. Simó and Riquer, "La conciència lingüística."

65. See Nebrija, *Gramática,* 13–17. Nearly a century earlier, the Italian humanist Lorenzo Valla (c. 1407–57) had already addressed the relationship between the rise and fall of Latin and the Roman Empire. Similarly, but in relation to the New World and the need for indigenous peoples to learn Spanish in place of their own tongues, Bernardo de Aldrete (1565–1645) opined, "Languages are like empires, that rise to a peak and then fall again, without being able to recover." See his *Del origen y principio de la lengua castellana* (*On the Origin and Beginning of the Castilian Language;* Rome, 1606), as cited by Burke, *Languages and Communities,* 20–21. See also Kagan, *Clio and the Crown,* 17–18.

66. Nebrija, *Gramática,* 16.

Isabel and certain highly placed Castilian clerics, his works were translated into Castilian. Nor was he the only Catalan author to be adapted—the works of the Mallorcan tertiary Ramon Llull and the Valencian poet Ausiàs March also gained loyal and enthusiastic followings in their Castilian translations, as did the works of the apostate Mallorcan polemicist Anselm Turmeda and the physician, mystic, and philosopher Arnau de Vilanova.[67] The chivalric novel *Tirant lo Blanc,* published in Catalan in 1490, was published in Castilian in 1511. Other works that were translated from Catalan were not original, but rather retranslations of writings composed in other languages, including the texts of classical authors such as Aristotle, Cicero, and Valerius Maximus.[68]

Translation was, of course, a fundamental motor of medieval literary culture; many works were translated from one language to another, transferred from one kingdom to another, or passed from one literary tradition to another. As Octavio Paz put it, "All styles have been translinguistic. . . . [They] are collective and transfer from one language to the other."[69] But medieval *translatio* was not modern "translation." Literal fidelity was not the goal; texts were glossed, interpreted, and edited at the translator's discretion. Indeed, texts were often usurped—translated or excerpted without any acknowledgment of the original author.[70] Thus, translation had been integral to the literary and cultural development of the Iberian Peninsula since the early Middle Ages. By the tenth century the monastery of Ripoll in the Catalan Pyrenees had developed as a famous center for the translation of Arabic works into Latin. With the expansion of Castile and Aragon into Islamic Spain the translation movement intensified. Tudela emerged as a center (Robert of Ketton, the first translator of the Qur'an into Latin, was a canon at Tudela), and Toledo became Latin Europe's main center of translation of Arabic texts, first under the patronage of Raimundo, archbishop of Toledo (1126–52), and subsequently under his successor, Rodrigo Jimenez de Rada (1209–47), and ultimately, King Alfonso X the Learned (1252–84).[71]

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67. The Valencian poet Ausiàs March (d. 1459) became influential in Spanish letters, as a consequence of his works being translated into Castilian and edited several times over the course of the sixteenth century. See Alvar, "Ausiàs March," 193–211; Ferreres, "La influencia," 469–84; Lloret, *Printing Ausiàs March;* and Lledó-Guillem, "Jorge de Montemayor." For a study of the influence of March on Lope de Vega, see McNerney, *Ausiàs March y Lope de Vega.*

68. Riera, "Catàleg d'obres," 702–3 and 709.

69. Paz, *Traducción,* 17.

70. Léglu, *Multilingualism,* 77.

71. Muñoz Raya, "La Edad Media."

In Toledo, works of science, history, and literature were translated from Arabic and Hebrew into Castilian and Latin—texts that in some cases originated in Greco-Latin traditions of antiquity. This process was a catalyst to the development of Castilian prose, as well as to the dissemination of Islamic learning and literature. By the time of the Catholic Kings, however, this movement had run its course in Spain, and there was very little interest in Hebrew and Arabic texts. Moreover, the political culture of their reign, which emphasized religious unity and conversion to Christianity, did not lend itself well to recognizing the merits of non-Christian literature; rather, the humanist movement of the time encouraged instead the recuperation of "proper" Latin and, to a lesser extent, Greek. Hence, at the request of Queen Isabel, Nebrija also prepared a comparative Castilian-Latin grammar (published in Salamanca in 1486), so that religious women could better their command of Latin without recourse to male teachers. In his dedication of this work to Isabel, Nebrija argued for the importance of knowledge of language on the basis that upon it "is founded our religion and Christian republic, as well as civil and canon law, medicine, and the arts that are referred to as Humanism, because they pertain to and are appropriate to Man."[72]

Isabel also commissioned the humanist writer Alonso de Palencia to compose a *Universal vocabulario en latín y romance* (*Universal Latin-Romance Wordlist;* Seville, 1490), with the aim of facilitating the composition of new Latin texts. Such a change in tide would have shocked Alfonso the Learned had he lived to see it, given the efforts he had made to cultivate Castilian and privilege it over Latin in the royal chancery. Alfonso himself is credited with composing his famous *Cántigas* dedicated to the Virgin Mary in the Galician vernacular. In any case, by the fifteenth century, Castilian was well established as a literary language; for example, whereas 54 percent of surviving Spanish incunabula are in the vernacular, for the rest of Europe the proportion of vernacular to Latin printed works is only 22 percent.[73] Part of the increasing tendency to publish in the vernacular was related to the growth of female readership. Women, unlike men, generally were not educated in Latin, and therefore, texts that were intended for female audiences needed to be composed in or translated into the vernacular. Hence,

72. Salvador, "El mecenazgo literario," 226; Nebrija, *Introducciones latinas.* But Latin remained a language for "men," reflected by the fact that Nebrija's comparative grammar was published only once. Also, as Surtz has noted, Nebrija did not dedicate any of his works in Latin to her, suggesting he was not very impressed by her progress in learning Latin. Surtz, "The Reciprocal Construction," 60. See also Salvador Miguel, "Isabel la Católica."

73. Delbrugge, *A Scholarly Edition,* 9; Griffin, *The Crombergers of Seville,* 5.

Isabel the Catholic, her considerable proficiency with Latin notwithstanding, ordered several translations of Latin texts along with Catalan ones.

All of this said, works were also translated from Castilian into Catalan.[74] The most famous example is Diego de San Pedro's best-selling sentimental novel, *La cárcel de amor* (*The Prison of Love*), which was translated into Catalan in 1493, only one year after its original publication. Castilian, however, had gained a momentum that no contemporary regional language could match. Of the sum of printed books published in the Iberian Peninsula before 1601, 60 percent were in the vernacular, but of those vernacular books, 88 percent were in Castilian, while Catalan and Portuguese accounted for only 6 percent each. Of all of these vernacular works, almost half were religious.[75] In other words, whereas Catalan and Portuguese were on a more or less equal footing, neither could compete with Castilian. Indeed, Portuguese could not even compete with Castilian within Portugal. When, in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries the Portuguese kings married a succession of Castilian princesses, it was their courtly culture that bent to the weight of the Spanish Empire and its language.[76] Thus, the Portuguese court became bilingual, thanks to the influence of both these powerful women readers, and the Castilian secretaries and courtiers who accompanied them, and overwhelmed the local administration. Such had not been the case with Catalan in fifteenth-century Castile; here Fernando had brought with him only some people from Catalonia and his other territories, and Catalan was used by him only to communicate with his subjects in the Crown of Aragon.[77] In these territories Catalan would remain a literary language and represent an energetic literary tradition through the early modern period, although it lost ground because of competition with Castilian and as a consequence of the humanist revival of Latin.[78]

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74. Russell, *Traducciones y traductores;* Badia, following Rubió i Lluch, Rubió i Balaguer, and Riquer, proposes a chronology for late medieval translation into Catalan. See Badia, "Traduccions al català," 40–43.

75. Wilkinson, "Exploring the Print World," 499 and n. 26; See also García-Sanpere and Wilkinson, "Catalan and the Book Industry."

76. See chapter 5.

77. Fernando corresponded both in Castilian and in Catalan, even with his lieutenant, Enric. See for example, de la Torre, "Algunos datos," 36, doc. 7; 36–37, doc. 8; 37, doc. 9; 39–40, doc. 12 (the latter in Catalan, the rest in Spanish). Fernando's last will and testament was composed in Castilian. See Cruïlles, *Germana de Foix,* 221, doc. XIII (Madrigalejo, 22 January 1516). Regarding Fernando's entourage see Gamero Igea, "Al servicio del rey"; and Gamero Igea, "La court et les villes." I would like to thank the author for allowing me to read these articles before they were published.

78. Peña Díaz, "El castellano," 153–54.

Isabel the Catholic and Eiximenis

One of the books that Isabel the Catholic wanted translated into Castilian was Eiximenis's *Llibre de les dones,* which was known in Castile as the *Libro de las donas,* or less commonly as the *Libro de las mugeres.*[79] In 1492 Isabel asked Morales, one of her *tesoreros* (treasurers), to contract a scribe to copy out a Castilian version of the *Llibre de les dones:* "By another order of the Queen, dated 8 February 1492, 2,000 *maravedís* to Morales for the translation of the *Libro de la donas.*"[80] Because there is no indication to the contrary, we can assume that she requested a translation of the whole book, and that therefore, when sections of this text appear in her library inventories, they represent additional copies of the text that she also had at her disposal. That said, library inventories do not specify whether each work listed had been bought, inherited, or received as a gift, or whether the owner had read or agreed with it. Thus, the fact that Queen Isabel commissioned a translation of the *Llibre de les dones* is what is most relevant. It was an intriguing commission, given that by this time printing had not only been established in Castile, but was actively patronized by the monarchs. Yet Isabel evidently preferred to have a handwritten copy, perhaps a deluxe one, in order to enjoy the book in a more exclusive and personal way, in what was a soon-to-become-passé, "medieval" way of approaching reading and books (fig. 4).

Indeed, the *Book of Women* would not be printed until half a century later, in 1542, when a thoroughly rearranged edition was produced for Catalina of Habsburg. But we should not be surprised that aristocratic patrons eschewed printed editions in the early years of the press. After all, the advantages of printing lay in the fact that incunabula were cheaper and faster to produce, which does not necessarily recommend them as an elite commodity. Nor were they objects of beauty or craftsmanship; unlike the lavishly illuminated and unique manuscripts that the wealthy preferred, printed books were generally plain and monochromatic—a triumph of utility over aesthetics.

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79. For instance, a Castilian adaptation of the *Llibre* is titled *Libro de las mujeres* in the manuscript from BRME: h-III-20. This manuscript contains only the third part of the book.

80. "Por otra cedula de la Reyna, fecha a 8-II-1492, a Morales 2,000 mrs. por el trasladar el Libro de las donas." See Torre y del Cerro and Torre, *Cuentas,* II:f. 46v (p. 10). See also Messeguer Fernández, "Franciscanimo de Isabel la Católica," 168. This Morales must be the same Alonso de Morales who appears in many of Isabel's ledgers. See Torre y del Cerro, *La casa,* 187; Ruiz García, *Los libros,* 282; Andrés Díaz, *El último decenio.*

Figure 4. Anonymous, portrait of Isabel the Catholic, c. 1490. Museo del Prado: P07656. Copyright © Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado.

Hence, it was precisely the great esteem in which Eiximenis's *Libro de las donas* was held by Isabel that kept it from being printed earlier. As Curt Wittlin has noted, the scriptorium of Isabel's beloved Hieronymite monastery of Santa María of Guadalupe (in Extremadura)—one of her favorite sojourns, and the burial place of Enrique IV—was producing a Spanish edition of the

Book of Women "almost continuously."[81] Eiximenis's spirituality appealed to the Hieronymites—an order that first settled in the Iberia Peninsula during his own lifetime, and that contributed to the atmosphere of reform in the late fourteenth century. Unfortunately, only seven of the fifteenth-century manuscripts of the *Libro de las donas* survive, although notices of lost copies abound.[82] Some of these copies date to the reign of Isabel's father, Juan II—a fact that demonstrates that Eiximenis's work was known in Castile even before her reign. The seven manuscripts that have been preserved are all written in a fine hand, are well bound, and copied on high-quality paper. One of them belonged to Alfonso Martínez de Toledo, the author of the *Arcipreste de Talavera* (or *Corbacho;* 1438)—a note in the manuscript states that he purchased it on 26 August 1448.[83] Martínez de Toledo had spent ten years (the 1420s) in the Crown of Aragon, at a time when it would have been impossible for a cleric-litterateur not to encounter Eiximenis's opus there.[84] In fact, what Martínez de Toledo owned was not a full edition of the *Libro;* his, like one of Isabel's, consisted only of the third part of Eiximenis's original: the long section (70 percent of the total text) that related to religious women. An inventory of the queen's library records the book (and mistakenly describes Eiximenis as a Dominican): "Another manuscript book of full folios on paper in Romance, which is said to be the third treatise of the "Book of Women" (*Libro de las mugeres*), written by the master, Friar Francisco Jiménez of the Order of the Preachers: the cover is of yellow leather, with two metal buckles."[85]

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81. Wittlin, "La primera adaptació castellana," 42–43; and Clausell Nácher, *Carro,* 20–22.

82. These include BNE: Ms. 12731, ms. 6228, and ms. 10156; BRME: Ms. h-iii-14 and ms. h-iii-20; B. Universitaria Salamaca: ms. 386; and B. del Noviciado, Madrid: 118-Z-10. See Clausell Nácher, "La tradició textual," 3:202.

83. BRME: h-iii-20; Wittlin, "La traducció castellana," 40.

84. Martínez de Toledo, *Arcipreste de Talavera o Corbacho,* 16. Martínez de Toledo's manuscript says: "The Franciscan (*fraile menor*), servant in Christ of Saint Francis, master Francisco Ximénez, native of Aragon, made the aforesaid book in the service of Christ and for the utility of faithful Christians and devout persons who may wish to read it." BRME: h-III-20, f. 250r. See also Viera, "El *Llibre de les dones.*"

85. This is the fifty-first entry in Clemencín's inventory of Isabel's library. Entries 49 and 50 also correspond to Eiximenis's works: two different copies of his *Natura angélica,* the title given in Spanish to his *Llibre del àngels;* Clemencín, *Elogio,* 443. Also of interest is entry 62, which lists a "Vida contemplativa" in Catalan; Clemencín, *Elogio,* 446. Ruiz García identifies these titles as part of the collection of the "royal treasury" of the Alcázar of Segovia guarded by Rodrigo de Tordesillas that was inventoried on the queen's orders by her secretary, Gaspar de Gricio, in November 1503. The *Natura angélica* is listed under entry 83, and the *Libro de las donas* (referring to the third part) is listed as 156; Ruiz García, *Los libros,* 296 and 302, and 314–15 (doc. 12). Ruiz García has also identified other relevant inventories that contained books, including some she gave away, or that belonged to her son. There is also an inventory of her chamber (*camera*) at the time of her death, in which books are listed. Most are devotional texts, and there are many duplicates. For example, there are fourteen

This reference and others show that the book circulated not only in its complete form, but also in sections, and it was typically the third treatise or part of the third treatise that was bound alone. For instance, an inventory of 1576 compiled by the Hieronymite monks of the palace-monastery El Escorial described it as "The Treatise on the Contemplative Life [composed] for the Lady Doña Sancha, Countess of Prada, by Brother Françisco Ximénez." Clearly this comprised only the "Treatise on Contemplation"—the third part of the *Libro de las donas.*[86] But this occasional excerpting appears to have been the only substantial editorial intervention at this point. In each of the two distinct translations of the book, Eiximenis's text was translated from Catalan into Castilian as closely as possible, and not otherwise altered, amended, or updated.[87]

Several scholars, including Félix de Llanos Torriglia, Juan Messeguer Fernández, and subsequently, David Viera, Curt Wittlin, José Luis Martín, and Carmen Clausell Nácher, have stated that Isabel used the *Libro de las donas* as an educational text for her daughters, basing this inference on the fact that it was a well-regarded text, that she ordered a copy of the manuscript, and that the book appears in other libraries, particularly that of her daughter, Juana.[88] Isabel certainly took an active role in her daughters' education. On 18 January 1487, for example, she obtained a bull from Innocent VIII that allowed her to choose her children's tutors from any of the clerics in her realm, including mendicants, and to change them as she saw fit.[89] Eventually, each of her four daughters became a queen herself: Isabel and Maria, queens

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books of hours and thirty-three devotionals listed. Ruiz García, "Los libros de Isabel," 54–57; and Ruiz García, "Entre la realidad y el mito," 359.

86. Clausell Nácher, "La pervivència," 445.

87. For instance, one of the fifteenth-century manuscripts consists of 335 folios (BRME: h-III-14). This compares well to a Catalan manuscript of 363 folios (BHUB: *LD,* Ms. 79 [Barcelona, 1434]) and to the 1495 printed edition of Barcelona, which has 267 (BC: *LD,* Inc. 11-VII-5).

88. Llanos Torriglia, *Una consejera de estado,* 32 (41); Messeguer Fernández, "Franciscanismo de Isabel la Católica," 168–69; and Martín, *Isabel la Católica: Sus hijas y las damas*. See also Aram, *Juana the Mad,* 23–25.

89. See a transcription of the bull in Torre y del Cerro, "Maestros de los hijos," 265–66. Diego de Deza, a Dominican and professor at the University of Salamanca, was Prince Juan's teacher. The chaplain Pedro de Enpudia taught Isabel from c. 1484 until her marriage in 1497. She died in childbirth a year later and remembered her teacher in her last will, giving him 20,000 *maravedís.* Andrés de Miranda, also a Dominican, was Juana's teacher from c. 1485 until her marriage in 1496. When Juana left for Flanders her teacher went back to his monastery of San Pablo de Burgos where until 1504 he was granted a stipend. In 1489 and 1490 Fray Miranda also taught the *infanta* Maria. Since 1483 another teacher, the chaplain Alexandre Giraldino, is listed as "teacher of the princesses." In 1500 and 1501 Miranda is listed as "head chaplain of the Princess of Wales." The Italian humanist Pedro Mártir became chaplain of the queen in 1501 and taught the courtiers, but not her children. He was "teacher of liberal arts to the knights of the court of Her Highness." See Torre y del Cerro, "Maestros de los hijos," 261–64.

of Portugal; Juana, queen of Castile; and Catalina, queen of England. But Isabel must also have been interested in the book for her own reading and that of her ladies and ladies-in-waiting. One of her functions as queen was to take care of the women at her court, and this involved, in part, seeing to their moral education, particularly as it related to their female "nature," and how to channel their energies toward virtuous deeds, pious acts, and marriage. And it seems that the *Book of Women* may have indeed made an impression, given that its presence is also attested in the library of Isabel's daughter and successor, Juana "the Mad," and in those of Isabel's granddaughters.[90]

For her part, Isabel the Catholic definitely ordered and possessed at least two of Eiximenis's books: the *Book of Women* and the *Book of Angels.* There were also a number of *Vitae Christi* in her collection, but the names of the authors are not always listed, so we cannot be sure that any of these refer to Hernando de Talavera's version of Eiximenis's text. Fernando too must have known Eiximenis's works from his many years in the Crown of Aragon, given how popular they were in royal and aristocratic circles there. And whereas none of Eiximenis's works figure in the inventory of Fernando's *cámara*—the record of the personal property he traveled with—this record dates from 1510, very late in Fernando's reign, and long after his daughters had all left Castile. The inventory consists of 1,060 entries, referring to items as diverse as silverware, furniture, textiles, clothing, religious objects for his chapel, and of course, books.[91] If we were to use this inventory as a lens through which to view the king's literary tastes, we would conclude that he was interested in religion, history, and *specula principum.* In the collection he carried with him were the *Vita Christi* of Ludolf of Saxony (which Isabel also owned) and works by Seneca and Valerius Maximus, together with Nebrija's *Vocabulario latino-español,* a book for learning Arabic, a selection of Aragonese chronicles, and a history of Spain.[92]

Eiximenis's *Book of Women* in a Genealogy of Texts

That said, there can be little doubt that Isabel and her daughters read, or at least were familiar with Eiximenis's *Libro,* when they were growing up in the Castilian court—if for no other reason than that there were few competing

90. Ruiz García, "Prácticas de lectura"; and Ferrandis, *Datos documentales,* 3:220–35.

91. RAH: Colección Salázar y Castro, ms. 198, ff. 91r–107v (21–28 October 1510). See also Rudolf, "El inventario," 188–91; and Nogales Rincón, "La capilla del rey católico."

92. Rudolf, "El inventario," 188.

volumes, and none that provided such a comprehensive guide to feminine piety, behavior, and devotion in any language, let alone Castilian. This is most likely why Isabel requested a translation. It would not be until 1524 that a similar book was composed in Latin—*De institutione feminae christianae* (*On the Education of a Christian Woman*) by the highly regarded humanist Joan Lluís Vives. It is not by chance that Vives, an author born into a *converso* family from Valencia—where Eiximenis had spent most of his life—wrote his book at the request of Isabel's daughter, Catalina, who was known in England as Queen Catherine of Aragon. Catherine was looking for a new book to serve as a guide for the education of her daughter, Mary, who was eight years old at the time and to the great disappointment of her father, Henry VIII, was the only heir to the throne of England.[93]

In other words, the *Llibre de les dones* has a pivotal place in the complex genealogy of texts discussing women, their character, and their roles in society and religion that began with early collections of examples and evolved into the work of Vives. In fact, as we will see in the next chapter, the anonymous adapter who produced the *Carro de las donas* in Castilian for Catalina of Portugal combined Eiximenis's text with that of Vives to create a new synthesis. At any rate, this is what the humanist Juan Justiniano (c. 1495–1556) explains in the prologue to his translation of Vives's *De institutione,* which he published under the title *Instrucción de la mujer cristiana* (*Instruction for a Christian Woman* [Valencia: Jorge Costilla, 1528]).[94] Since the time of Eiximenis, it seems that Valencia had become something of an epicenter for the dissemination of this genre. It was here that Justiniano, who hailed originally from either Italy or Crete, undertook his translation of Vives, and this was done once again at the behest of a queen who was based in the city.[95] His patroness was none other than Germana de Foix, Fernando the Catholic's second wife. Fernando had predeceased her, and Germana, the dowager of Aragon, was serving as lieutenant of the Kingdom of Valencia (1523–38) on behalf of Carlos V, along with her third husband, Fernando de Aragon, Duke of Calabria.[96]

Germana had been educated at the court of Louis XII of France (1498–1515). Both she and her husband, the duke, were accustomed to the life of a sophisticated and elaborate court—an environment they strove to recreate in Valencia. There can be little doubt that their patronage was instrumental in

93. See the conclusion.

94. Vives, *Instrucción*.

95. Rausell-Guillot and González Alba, "Juan Justiniano," 255.

96. See Faulí, *Germana de València,* 36–45; Cruïlles, *Germana de Foix,* 174; and López Alemany, *Ilusión áulica*.

contributing to the establishment in Valencia of what Jordi Rubió i Balaguer referred to as a "Valencian school" of authors who wrote in Castilian.[97] Indeed, Juan Justiniano, who was one of Germana's courtiers, formed part of this movement. Hence, in a striking parallel to the case of Maria de Luna, the patroness of Eiximenis's *Scala Dei,* Germana was also a queen, and held the same important public political position, lieutenant of the Kingdom of Valencia. And just as Maria had faced the factionalism of the noble *bandositats,* Germana was confronted with the Revolt of the Germanies or Brotherhoods (1519–23) and the harsh repression that followed it.[98] Both were drawn to Eiximenis and Vives.

Further echoing the relationship between Eiximenis and Maria de Luna, Juan Justiniano urged Germana in his dedicatory prologue to the dowager queen to remember that her political power and position notwithstanding, men were superior to her by virtue of their gender. As he writes, "It is certain that men have to govern and instruct women, and they have to follow and obey"; this, in his view, is precisely why so few edificatory texts had been written for women: "And this, I believe, has been the reason why the authorities have neglected to write books of instruction aimed particularly at [women], thinking that by teaching only men would be to take care of two tasks with one effort, and (as they say) kill two birds with one stone."[99]

Next, Justiniano moves on to sketch a genealogy of texts that instruct women or address female character, which culminates in Vives's work. He begins with the New Testament Epistles of Saint Paul, followed by the writings of the fathers of the church (including Cyprian, Jerome, Augustine, and Ambrose), and then (anachronistically) those of the Greek philosophers (including Plato, Aristotle, and Xenophon). At this point he continues:

> And then after many centuries another notable authority appeared, who was Friar Francisco Ximénez, of the Order of the Mendicants, Bishop of Barcelona, who with paternal charity took upon himself the task of instructing and educating Christian women. And, thus, drawing on many authorities and examples, both from among pagans and Christians, he wrote a great book, entitled *The Book of Women,* which,

97. Riquer, *Història,* 3:580; Silleras-Fernandez, "Paradoxes humanistes," 156; and Perea Rodríguez, "El humanismo áulico," 266–67.

98. The Germanies (or Hermandades; 1520–21) was a revolt similar to the contemporary Comuneros uprising in Castile, and was restricted for the most part to Valencia, although it also flared up in other parts of the Crown of Aragon. It represented a reaction on the part of the guilds against Carlos V's centralizing policies, and scapegoated the *mudéjar* population, many of whom were forced to convert to Christianity.

99. Vives, *Instrucción,* trans. Justiniano, xv.

> although he taught many useful things worthy for all to know, he wrote in a language which few master, because he wrote in Limousine (*Lemosín*), which is a language somewhere between Catalan and Gascon, that was spoken in the Kingdoms of Valencia and Catalonia at that time—content as he was to guide his own sheep, like a Good Shepherd, without chasing after the rest.[100]

Obviously, Justiniano was not entirely clear on the finer points of Eiximenis's life and work—for example, the friar was never bishop of Barcelona and he did not write in Limousin Occitan. But the Catalan of the fourteenth century may have appeared different enough from the Valencian of the sixteenth to a foreigner to seem to be a different language. Somewhat more significantly, Justiniano did not seem to know that the *Book of Women* had already been translated into Spanish in Castile in the fifteenth century. In any event, regardless of the fact that Eiximenis wrote in what was for Justiniano an obscure, little-known tongue, he represented a turning point in the feminine didactic tradition. In his view, most male writers in this tradition "instead of reaching out a hand to women, applied the foot, neither instructing nor teaching them, but rather scolding and reproaching them."[101] Eiximenis represented the exception. Among those Justiniano targets with this criticism are Euripides, Juvenal, and other satirical poets of Rome, as well as more modern writers, including Boccaccio, Pogio, and Mangenato and "in Spain, Torrellas, and a certain Alonso Martínez, Archpriest of Talavera."[102] With this concluded, he continues his address to Queen Germana, "This I say, most illustrious Queen and Lady, since Christianity has such need as it has for some sort of reform and reordering as regards the lives of women, it has provided us with, amongst other noteworthy teachers of our time, another native of Spain, one born even in this City of Valencia, where your Highness resides, who is called Doctor Juan Luis Vives, Tutor to the Princess, Lady Mary of England, your highness's niece."[103]

While it may have been true that there were no other substantial works on female morality quite like Eiximenis's *Libro,* Justiniano's assessment was not entirely fair. A number of works that explored womanhood and were intended to instruct women had been written over the previous century, including the *Libro de las virtuosa e claras mujeres* (*Book of Virtuous and Illustrious Women;* 1446) by Juan II's favorite, Álvaro de Luna, which follows Boccaccio's

100. Vives, *Instrucción,* trans. Justiniano, xvi–xvii.
101. Vives, *Instrucción,* trans. Justiniano, xvii.
102. Vives, *Instrucción,* trans. Justiniano, xvii.
103. Vives, *Instrucción,* trans. Justiniano, xviii.

De mulieribus claris (*On Famous Women;* c. 1362), and the anonymous *Castigos y doctrinas que un sabio daba a sus hijas* (*Punishments and Instructions That a Wise Man Gave to His Daughter;* mid-fifteenth century), a dialogue in which a father gives advice to his daughters on how to behave as wives, and manage their households.[104] In addition, "mirrors of princes," and other similar works that were not broadly disseminated outside of royal and noble circles, were written during Isabel's reign. Indeed, in 1468 the Augustinian canon, Martín de Córdoba, had composed a *speculum* intended to guide the young Isabel as queen, a year before she married Fernando, at a time when she was the most likely successor to the Crown.

Gender, according to Judith Butler, "is in no way a stable identity or locus of agency from which various acts proceed; rather, it is an identity tenuously constituted in time—an identity instituted through a stylized repetition of acts."[105] In his work, Martín de Córdoba adopts a performative approach to gender similar to that affected by Eiximenis in his construction of the parable of Constança de Mallorca for Maria de Luna. As he explains, "So, the Lady, although she may be female by nature, can strive to be male in virtue, and so she would do better not to puff herself up in vainglory, but rather, bow in humility."[106] Moreover, Córdoba adds, Isabel ought to do so all the more because, as a princess, she was to be a mirror for her subjects: "And if all women ought to strive for such a synthesis, a princess needs to all the more, given that she is more than a mere woman, and she ought to carry a masculine soul in her feminine body."[107]

Córdoba recognized Isabel's right to become queen, but he wanted to see her under the supervision of a husband. As Cristina Guardiola-Griffiths has observed, the fact that the *Jardín* was printed in 1500, and most likely at the initiative of the royal couple, shows that the book was viewed as a useful tool for the education and legitimization of another female ruler, Isabel's daughter, Juana, who was her mother's successor to the throne of Castile.[108] Writers like Córdoba offered their work to Isabel, either in the hopes of establishing a relationship of patronage with her, or of providing advice they thought was needed, or in order to put her in her place as a woman. Indeed, several authors composed texts intended to guide her construction of a model of queenship that conformed to their patriarchal paradigms, or simply put, to criticize her. The fact that Isabel was such a powerful queen, who ruled

104. See Archer, *The Problem of Woman,* 47–53.
105. Butler, *Gender Trouble,* 97.
106. Córdoba, *Jardín,* 107.
107. Córdoba, *Jardín,* 87.
108. Guardiola-Griffiths, *Legitimizing the Queen,* 18.

in her own right, together with another anomaly—she had an Aragonese king by her side—provoked what Barbara Weissberger has called "anxious masculinity."[109] The tension shows through in the work of those male authors who had no hope of controlling Isabel in real life, and so tried to control her through the medium of their texts.

Nevertheless, a certain restraint on the part of such authors, including Martín de Córdoba, can be observed. For example, Hernando de Talavera, who would go on to serve as Isabel's confessor, had written a short book of advice during the time that he was the prior of the monastery of Nuestra Señora del Prado (Valladolid) and confessor to María de Pacheco, the mother of Juan II's favorite, Juan Pacheco, and a cultivated lady.[110] His *Avisación a la virtuosa y muy noble señora doña María de Pacheco, condessa de Benavente, de cómmo se deve cada día ordenar y occupar para que expienda bien su tiempo* (*Advice to the Virtuous and Very Noble Lady María de Pacheco, Countess of Benavente, about How to Order Everyday Life and How to Use Time Well*) was not nearly as forceful or radical as Eiximenis's *Book of Women*.[111] Talavera's *Avisación* was rather more pragmatic regarding the expectations of how a married noblewoman ought to approach the subject of religion and daily life. Although he shared the conviction, common to medieval authors, that women should be kept occupied and under the firm control of their husbands, he understood that a woman like the countess would not be able to devote her life exclusively to contemplation (as Eiximenis had advocated for his patronesses, Sanxa Ximenis and Maria de Luna).[112] Talavera's aim was to ensure that his patroness, the Countess of Benavente, would remain an obedient and pious Christian wife and mother—nothing more.[113] As he put it,

> Since the general rule is that the inferior and lesser are directed and moved by the superior and greater, just as humans are by angels, and the elements and the earthly things are by celestial bodies, then how can you, virtuous Lady, follow your order and law: being obliged to follow and obey the will of another, how can you remain awake if your husband wants you to sleep, or how can you remain asleep if he

109. Weissberger, *Isabel Rules,* xiv–xvi.

110. Segura Graíño, "Las sabias mujeres," 176; and Marino, *Don Juan Pacheco,* 3–10.

111. BRME: Ms. b.IV.26, ff. 1r–27v.

112. Also, as Johnston points out, Talavera distanced himself from "the traditional scheme of the seven virtues and vices." See Johnston, "A Theology of Self-Fashioning." I would like to thank Professor Johnston for allowing me to read his work before it was published. See also Ladero Quesada, "Fray Hernando de Talavera," 269–74.

113. He also wrote a *Summa y breve compilación* at the time he was bishop of Avila for the Cistercian nuns of that city, c. 1486–92. See Codet, "Hablar de la mujer," 1–18.

> wants you to wake, how can you pray if he wants you to talk, how can you work if he wants you to be idle, or how can you relax if he wants you to work?[114]

But that said, he does allow: "For your sake, noble Lady, you ought to take the necessary time for your well-being, for your edification, and for some entertainment."[115]

The sentiment among late fifteenth-century moralists that women should be docile, but not abandon worldly concerns for prayer, is reflected in other works written to advise Isabel. For example, in the *Regimiento de príncipes* (*Program for Princes*) composed by Gómez Manrique for Isabel and Fernando, the nobleman exhorted his patroness not to become a "holy queen," who devoted her time only to praying, but instead to rule:

> The praying over psalters,
> and reciting well of prayers,
> leave these to the religious
> in their monasteries;
> You, Lady, in order to rule
> your peoples and your realms,
> so that they may live well,
> and to keep them from ill,
> should put off your own praying for another time.[116]

Gómez Manrique offered Isabel advice similar to that given to Martí I of Aragon by Eiximenis and Pere Marí—advice that contrasted with the recommendations they gave to Maria de Luna, as we saw in the previous chapter.[117] As a ruling queen and a woman, Isabel was such a unique and striking figure that she cast a long shadow over the literature of her time, both in the many works that were addressed explicitly to her, and in those ostensibly written for other members of the royal family. This can be seen in the didactic treatise Alonso Ortiz composed for Prince Juan titled *Liber de educatione Johannis Serenissimi Principis et primogeniti regum potentissimorum Castelle Aragonum et Siciliae Ferdinandi et Helisabet inclyta prosapia coniugum clarissimorum* (*Book of the Education of the Most Serene Prince and Firstborn of the Most Powerful Rulers of Castile, Aragon and Sicily, the Renowned Couple, Isabel of Illustrious Lineage and Ferdinand*). Although this Latin *speculum principum*

114. BRME: Ms. b.IV.26, f.10r.
115. BRME: Ms. b.IV.26, f. 18r.
116. Gómez Manrique, *Regimiento,* 61 (copla 68).
117. See chapter 3.

was written for the heir of the throne, Juan, it was his mother who took the role of protagonist in the course of an imaginary dialogue with a main character of the work in conversation with Pedro González de Mendoza. The cardinal-archbishop of Toledo (r. 1482–95) was given the role of the wise clergyman, instructing the queen regarding politics, education, and virtue.[118]

In her groundbreaking study, *Isabel Rules,* Weissberger reviews the substantial body of work written in the time of Isabel that reflects male anxieties regarding female rulership.[119] The various authors viewed the queen differently, as is reflected in the literary-historical models they compared her to. Some saw her as a Virago, a new "Queen of the Amazons," others as a Diana, and for still others, she resembled a holy and virginal Madonna figure.[120] As Elizabeth Howe put it, she was seen either as Zenobia—a strong-willed and independent queen, praised for her courage, virtue, and intellectual achievement—or as Penelope—the forbearing wife of an errant king, whose strength lay in her faith and pious resolve.[121] In other words, contemporary writers presented her as having either the "manly" attributes of courage and leadership or the "feminine" ones of shame (*vergüenza*), perseverance, and—to some extent—prudence. Little surprise, it was clergymen, like Fray Íñigo de Mendoza and Talavera, who favored the comparison with Penelope, modeling Isabel as a virtuous queen, and a good mother and wife, drawing on examples from the Old Testament. For Fray Íñigo she was Judith, and for Talavera, Deborah.[122]

Fray Íñigo, Ortiz, Talavera, and Cisneros were among the 140 religious men and women who figure in Isabel's account books, and who benefited from her patronage, between 1497 and 1504.[123] Whatever their conception of her as queen, and regardless of whether they leaned more toward advocating contemplation or action for her, they consistently presented her as an extraordinary and inimitable figure—a model worthy of emulation, but impossible to equal. Isabel herself was aware of the tensions her position generated, and the conflicting images of her that her subjects perceived and advocated for. Hence, she strove to present herself as a legitimate queen, who

118. Ortiz dedicated his works to various members of the royal family. His five treatises were printed in Seville in 1493. BRME: Inc. 23-V-11.

119. Weissberger analyzed "the shaping of the Queen's power through literary representation" in a series of works written between 1451 and 1504, such as *Laberinto de fortuna, Carajicomedia, Repetición de amores, Arte de axedrez,* and *Jardín de nobles doncellas.* Weissberger, *Isabel Rules,* xiv.

120. See Howe, "Zenobia or Penelope?," 91–102. See also Lehfeldt, "The Queen at War," 108–19; and Silleras-Fernandez, "Exceso femenino."

121. Howe, "Zenobia or Penelope?," 94–95.

122. Ibid., 95 and 98–99.

123. Torre y del Cerro, *La casa de Isabel,* 9.

was at once pious, an independent ruler, and a devoted mother and wife. She was able to manage this in part because of the networks of patronage and influence she cultivated and the books that she commissioned and read. Among these books were devotional texts, including those of Eiximenis; and it was his model that proved the most appealing and durable. As will be see in the final chapter of this study, with the adaptation of the *Llibre de les dones* as the *Carro de las donas,* the notion of holy queenship would resurge in the half century following Isabel's reign, and she herself would be portrayed as a modern Sanxa of Mallorca.

Eiximenis and Devotional Texts in Pre-Reform Castile

Independent of the trajectory of the *Llibre de les dones* and the *Scala Dei,* the *Tractat de la contemplació* (*Treatise on Contemplation*), which featured in both of them, had its own curious afterlife in Castile. The core ideas of the essay, together with some of the text, found their way into a new book, the *Exercitatorio de la vida espiritual* (*Regimen for the Spiritual Life*). This book, which marked the beginning of a new strain of mysticism in Iberia, was the work of García Jiménez de Cisneros, abbot of Montserrat and cousin of Cardinal Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, the royal confessor and Franciscan friar. The *Exercitatorio* was first published at Montserrat by Jean Luschner in 1500 in two editions, Spanish and Latin.[124] It was a very important text, along with later works by the Franciscans Alonso de Madrid, *Arte para servir a Dios* (*Art of Serving God;* 1521), Francisco de Osuna, *Tercer abecedario espiritual* (*Third Spiritual Primer;* 1527), and Bernardino Ladero, *Subida al Montesión* (*Ascent to Mount Zion;* 1521–35). It was books like these that laid the ground for the mystically oriented authors of the sixteenth century, including Teresa of Ávila and Saint Ignatius Loyola.[125]

It is clear that Eiximenis's *Scala Dei,* which was itself essentially the third part of the *Llibre de les dones* (updated to be presented to Maria de Luna), was instrumental in the development and dissemination of this new piety—an interior Christianity similar to that championed around 1520 by Erasmus. Eiximenis's works did not emphasize doctrinal knowledge or revolve around complex theological problems, but proposed instead to approach God through intense personal devotion and private contemplation. Thus, his work served as a crucial precursor to a renovated Observant Franciscan spirituality in the

124. Cisneros, *Exercitatorio de la vida espiritual;* manuscript at BC: Reserva, Inc. 37–12.
125. Peers, "La época fernandina," 65.

Iberian Peninsula.[126] Abbot García Jiménez de Cisneros was, like Eiximenis, a participant in the movement of renewed spirituality that characterized the late Middle Ages—one that undermined the monopoly that monastic houses held on contemplation and opened it up as a means of attaining Christian perfection accessible to all believers.[127] This was accompanied by a conviction that the rules governing mendicant and monastic orders, whether Franciscans or Benedictines, needed to be strengthened and enforced. These, along with a more profound connection with God through prayer and contemplation, were the objectives of Cisneros's *Exercitatorio.*

The appeal of Eiximenis in late fifteenth-century Castile was tied to the devotional culture and atmosphere of reform that developed within the courts of Juan II and his daughter, Isabel the Catholic, and that were deliberately promoted by two of Isabel's confessors, Hernando de Talavera and Cardinal Cisneros. This situates the works of this Catalan Franciscan within a complex web of production of religious texts that were written, translated, and printed in the second half of the fifteenth century. Calls to reform the church and institutions, to bring them more into line with the "apostolic life," as it is depicted in the Gospels, occurred periodically through the Middle Ages, whenever the church was perceived as tilting into decadence, or when it was left lagging behind sociocultural changes. Eiximenis lived through the beginning of one such wave of reform, and it was only during the reign of the Catholic Kings that it culminated—at least in terms of the Franciscan order—with the success of the Observant movement that he had helped to establish.[128]

For their part, Fernando and Isabel were committed to cleaning up the regular and secular clergy in their realms, and found committed allies in Talavera and, particularly, Cisneros—archbishop of Toledo, primate of Spain, Inquisitor General, and, eventually, regent of Spain. Talavera and Cisneros embodied all of the characteristics of the "ideal bishops" the Catholic Kings aspired to promote.[129] As their chaplain, the humanist Lucio Marineo Siculo observed regarding Isabel's predilections, "When it was time to dispense any office or mitre, the queen valued more a person's virtue, honesty, and wisdom than their wealth and generosity, even if she was in their debt."[130] Of course, there was a practical and political side to this policy; these new bishops were

126. Viera, "The Presence of Francesc Eiximenis," 1–6; Rojas Fernández, "Varia fortuna," 364.

127. García-Villoslada, *Historia de la Iglesia,* 3–2:333.

128. García Oro, *Cisneros y la reforma,* 181–84.

129. In García Oro and Azcona's words, "The bishops ought to be Spanish, honest, educated, and members of the middle class." García de Oro, *Cisneros y la reforma,* 38.

130. See Ladero Quesada, "Isabel la Católica vista por sus contemporéneos."

not drawn from the landed aristocracy, and therefore their loyalties would be undivided and untainted. Moreover, they usually came from humble or marginal backgrounds, and so, were dependent on the monarchs' goodwill and support. Talavera came from a *converso* family, and Cisneros from a modest, if not poor, background.

Cisneros, in his capacity as head of the church in Castile, was determined to raise the spiritual level of both clergy and laypeople through reading. He closely supervised the Isabelline clerical reform, which set out to address many of the same persistent problems as the Gregorian Reform of the mid-eleventh century. To accomplish this goal, two basic approaches were adopted: education and coercion/negotiation. It was clear that the clergy of the time needed to be better educated, and laypeople as well—particularly the large population of New Christians (converted Jews and Muslims) in Castile. To this end the Catholic Kings and Cardinal Cisneros promoted the publication of pious and devotional literature that was aimed at inspiring, educating, and guiding the clergy and faithful alike. Hence, Cisneros supported the printing of the first parallel Bible, the Complutensian Polyglot, and the previously banned Mozarabic missal and breviary.

Whereas Cisneros was most interested in educating the Christian faithful, Talavera, for his part, saw his flock as the New Christians and the Muslims of his Archdiocese of Granada. He found Eiximenis's *Vita Christi* a worthy tool for the task. As he acknowledged in the prologue of his adaptation, "It is most appropriate for every Christian to have the books that are written about that very holy doctrine, because reading them or hearing them read he often can and will understand what he ought to do to imitate and follow. For no one can walk well on the path if he does not know it, nor can he know if no one informs him of it."[131] As Cynthia Robinson has noted, fragments of Eiximenis's *Vita Christi* were included in fifteenth-century Castilian choir books because this work was seen as an effective tool for catechizing converts.[132] Robinson holds that "whereas in most other European contexts the 'default' version of Christ's life that would have impacted the devotional lives of all Christian both lay and monastic, whether directly or indirectly, was the *Meditatione vita Christi,* in Castile, until the final decade of the fifteenth century, it was Eiximenis's *Vita Christi*."[133] She argues that Eiximenis's work and his take on a divine and powerful Christ, his presentation of his life and Passion, and his portrayal of a divine Virgin Mary had a fundamental

131. BNE: Inc. 1126, f. 2r. See also Hauf, "Fray Hernando de Talavera."
132. Robinson, "Preaching to the Converted," 219.
133. Robinson, *Imagining the Passion,* 12 and 10–22.

impact on the devotional culture and the artistic images produced in Castile in the final decades of the fifteenth century. In any case, his text was key for meditating on Christ's life and death, but focusing on spirituality instead of on the violence that his body suffered during the Passion, as was the case in most other works of that genre.[134]

Eiximenis's *Llibre dels àngels* (*Book of Angels*) also proved popular in the Castile of the Catholic Kings and their successors. Twenty-two Catalan and seven Castilian manuscripts of this text—the first dating to the reign of Juan II—as well as two Catalan (Barcelona 1494) and three Castilian (Burgos 1490 and 1517 and Alcalá 1527) print editions are attested.[135] The work was also translated into French, Flemish, and Latin.[136] Not surprisingly, the manuscripts were often produced at monasteries that were proponents of the new spirituality. For instance, Fray Miguel de Cuenca, prior of the monastery of San Bernardo de Toledo, and Fray Gonzalo de Ocaña, prior of the monastery of Sisla, translated the *Book of Angels* in 1434.[137] Sisla was something of a hotbed of dissent, particularly at the end of the fifteenth century, when it became tainted by association with the heretical *Alumbrado* movement. On the other hand, the Castilian royal courts, notably that of Juan II, and aristocrats, such as Íñigo López de Mendoza, also patronized the translation and adaptation of this work.[138]

In fact, Eiximenis was only one of a group of devotional authors whose works were translated and printed in Castile and in other European kingdoms at the time. The devotional was a popular genre—one of the most frequently produced types of book in fifteenth- and sixteenth-century Iberia.[139] For example, Ludolph of Saxony's *Vita Christi,* so loved by Eiximenis (and by the Catholic Kings), was translated into several languages, including Dutch (in 1400 and 1487), German (partly, c. 1470), Portuguese (by Bernando de Alcobaça in 1495), Catalan (in part by Roïç de Corella, between 1496 and 1502), and Castilian (by Ambrosio de Montesinosin 1502–3).[140] *El*

134. Boon, *The Mystical Science,* 9–10.

135. Alvar and Lucía Megías, "Repertorio de traducciones," 11.

136. Ivars, "El Llibre dels àngels," 123–25; and Viera, "The Presence of Eiximenis," 3.

137. BNE: Ms. 9243. Rojas Fernández, "Varia fortuna," 365.

138. Rojas Fernández, "Varia fortuna," 365–66.

139. Griffin notes that in the first half of the sixteenth century over half of the books printed by the Cromberger press in Seville were devotional in nature, and that of these "religious works," between one-quarter and one-third were written in or translated into the vernacular. Griffin, *The Cromberger of Seville,* 146–47.

140. Isabel owned several copies of this text—an edition in four volumes published by Stalisnau de Polonia in 1502–3. The Crombergers of Seville reprinted the *Cartujano* seventeen times between 1520 and 1551. Griffin, *The Crombergers of Seville,* 246. See also Peers, "La época fernandina," 67; and Delbrugge, *A Scholary Edition,* 41–43.

cartujano, as Saxony's *Vita Christi* was known in Castile, influenced a whole series of texts produced in Spain in this period, including Fray Íñigo de Mendoza's *Coplas de la vita Christi,* Padilla's *Retablo de la vida de Cristo,* and Andrés de Li's *Thesoro de la passión*. Each of these authors related in one way or another to Isabel's court: Montesinos and Mendoza were both Observant Franciscans; Padilla a Cartuxan, and Li a convert from Judaism.[141]

Queen Isabel herself also encouraged the production and translation of devotional books. In fact, the queen had shown great interest in the translation of *El cartujano.* In a letter to Hernando de Talavera dated 4 December 1493, she expressed concern that a certain individual (Logroño) who had been charged with preparing a bilingual manuscript edition of the book was not completing the job as quickly as she wanted: "Order Logroño not to lift his hand from his copy of *El cartujano,* with its Romance and Latin text together, just as I ordered him, until he finishes it, and that he should send it to me as soon as he has it finished."[142] Nor was this her only copy. The printed translation by Ambrosio de Montesinos was not only dedicated to both Isabel and Fernando, but is attested among their personal collections, both Fernando's *camara* and Isabel's library. Indeed, it is worth noting that even though this four-volume printed edition had been in the queen's possession since 1504—indeed, it was the first book produced by the printing press in Alcalá de Henares (by Stalisnao Polono, 1502–4)—she also requested a deluxe manuscript edition of the text for her own use, just as she had done for Eiximenis's *Libro de las donas.*[143] Books were objects as well as texts, and Isabel prized objects worthy of a queen.

She also showed great interest in the publication of the *Vita Christi* by Isabel de Villena, an abbess of royal blood, who ruled the Clarissan convent of the Trinity in Valencia until her death in 1490. As a consequence of Isabel's interest, the new abbess, Aldonça de Monsoriu, undertook the task of preparing the manuscript and dedicated the work to the queen in her prologue.[144] This book was published in 1497 in the form Isabel de Villena intended—in Catalan—and presents an idiosyncratic rewriting of the life of Christ, in which his mother, the Virgin, became the true protagonist. Likewise, another of Eiximenis's favorite works, the *Scala Dei* by John Climacus,

141. Whinnom, "The Supposed Sources," 46; and Miguel-Prendes, "Reimagining Diego," 11–12.

142. Clemencín, *Elogio,* 378, cited by Surtz, "The Reciprocal," 55. Ruiz identifies Logroño as possibly the canon from Seville, Juan Alfonso de Logroño; Ruiz García, *Los libros,* 203–4 n. 376.

143. Salvador Miguel, "Isabel la Católica," III. 1 prosa.

144. Surtz, "The Reciprocal," 67. Regarding Isabel de Villena, see Piera, "Writing, Auctoritas," 105–18; Graña Cid, "Un paradigma femenino," 305–24; and Twomey, *The Fabric of Marian Devotion*.

was translated in this early period of the Catholic Kings' reign, and then subsequently printed by Luis de Granada in Lisbon in 1562. Alonso Ortiz, who, like Montesinos, had ties to the Isabelline court, translated the *Meditations* of Saint Anselm in 1504, and dedicated a series of original works to the royal couple. In 1510 the *Tratado de la vida espiritual* by Eiximenis's contemporary the Valencian Dominican Saint Vicent Ferrer was published in Toledo. A year later, an edition of Saint Augustine's *Meditations* and *Soliloquies* was published in Valencia, and in 1512 a collection of Saint Catherine of Siena's works was printed in Alcalá de Henares. In 1516 Thomas Kempis's *Contemptus mundi,* or *De imitatio Christi* (*Contempt for the World,* or *The Imitation of Christ*), was published in Castilian, having been previously translated into Catalan in 1490.[145] Elisa Ruiz García's study of the queen's "chamber" reveals that there were many books among the objects she carried with her in the sixteen chests that comprised her personal effects. The titles here confirm her genuine interest in devotional literature, and include works such as Kempis's *Contemptus mundi* and Ludolph of Saxony's *Vita Christi*.[146]

It was the growing emphasis on private prayer that was responsible to a great extent for Eiximenis's enduring popularity—a movement that can be traced back as far as the eleventh century and the Carthusians, and that climaxed in the sixteenth century. In the *Scala Dei* he exhorted Queen Maria de Luna to pray in private in her own space—"a room of one's own," as it were—in order to establish an intimate and immediate relationship with God. Although public religious ritual would remain important, this signaled a shift toward a prioritization of interior and personal devotion. This coincided with the expansion of literacy and the practice of reading; instead of listening to religious texts recited publicly, the faithful were able and encouraged to explore texts and their own beliefs in a more independent manner. Of course, contemplation and private prayer had been a feature of Christian devotion from the beginning, as expressed in Jesus's exhortation in Matthew 6:6 to "go into your room and shut the door," through the contemplation Augustine recommends in his *Confessions,* and on to the fourteenth-century Carthusian Ludolf of Saxony, whose *Vita Christi* recommended private and

145. Peers, "La época fernandina," 67. Kempis's *Contemptus mundi* is a key work for understanding late medieval devotion, and was the best-known of all devotional texts, read by Catholic and Protestants alike. Even Ignacio de Loyola recommended it in his *Ejercicios espirituales.* There are more than 800 surviving manuscripts and 639 printed editions from between 1500 and 1650 and in many languages. See von Habsburg, *Catholic and Protestant Translations,* 2, 113, and 181.

146. Ruiz García, "Prácticas de lectura"; Ruiz García, "Entre la realidad y el mito," 359.

solitary reading of the Bible.[147] Paul Saenger has documented this shift of practice in the cathedral schools of the eleventh and twelfth centuries, and in the twelfth and thirteenth centuries in the *studia* of Cistercian abbeys.[148] But it was the proponents of the *Devotio moderna* in the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries who finally transformed the popular devotional ideal. Thinkers such as Gerhard Groote, who founded the seminal lay community, the Brethren of the Common Life, in the Netherlands in the late fourteenth century, were the ones who advocated the practice of silent reading, and the mystical contemplation this could prompt, as the most efficacious of pious exercises. This at once was fed by, and encouraged, the cycle of the broadening of literary production and the consumption of books that the dissemination of the printing press made possible.

The reforming branches of the mendicants, orders that were by nature urban and actively engaged with the general populace, also advocated for these practices as they worked through their own processes of reform. Even before the development of printing, the spread of vernacular literature, and the growing popularity of Books of Hours and other devotional texts, provided a means by which members of lay society could engage in this trend. All of these factors contributed to the culmination of the movement toward individual piety and devotion that added to and was sustained by the fracturing of the Catholic Church in the Protestant and Catholic Reformations of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries—reform movements that were largely powered by popular rather than clerical discontent, and which mark what Peter Burke has called the beginning of "a culture of sincerity."[149] For both Protestants and Catholics the practice of meditation and prayer in conjunction with reading was seen central to prompting the type of religious

147. Saenger, "Silent Reading," 401.

148. These manuscripts were not like the ones produced in previous centuries. They were written out in silence by scribes (which is to say they were not dictated), and they were supposed to be read in silence (rather than aloud) by the readers. Saenger, "Silent Reading," 384; and see also an extended view of this work in Saenger, *Space between Words,* 275–77.

149. See Burke, *The Courtier,* 113. Molekamp cites and analyzes several interesting examples of English noble ladies and their use of pious and devotional readings that resonate with the recommendations given by Eiximenis, such as his advice regarding where Queen Maria should pray. She notes that in seventeenth-century English funeral sermons, noblewomen were always urged to spend part of each day in secret devotion. They were encouraged to pray in an enclosed space, which in this era would normally mean the lady's personal closet. For example, a sermon commemorating Mary Gunter recalls: "Private prayers that she daily read in her Ladies bed chamber . . . thrice every day on her knees before God in secret, like a true worshipper." Another Puritan noblewoman, Margaret Marwood (d. 1660), is praised in her funeral sermon as "a constant closet-visitor, a constant worshipper, never forgetting nor omitting her hours of devotion." See Molekamp, "Early Modern Women," 53–74, especially 54–56.

experience that could lead the believer from the constraints of the material world to the transcendence of the spiritual.[150] Hence, English Protestant funeral sermons directed ladies to pray in a private space, either their closets or their gardens—an indication that the setting and choreography of devotion that Eiximenis had promoted survived even the Reformation.[151]

García Jiménez de Cisneros Meets Eiximenis: The Fate of the *Book of Queen Maria* in Castilian

García Jiménez de Cisneros (1455–1510), the less famous of the Cisneros cousins, professed as a Benedictine monk at the monastery of San Benito of Valladolid in 1475.[152] Whether on his own merits or on the basis of his influential kinsman, in 1493 the Catholic Kings appointed him as abbot of one of the great monastic houses of the peninsula, the monastery of Santa Maria de Montserrat in Catalonia. This foundation was not only an emblematic Catalan house with a long-standing tradition as a site of Marian veneration and pilgrimage; it was also an important cultural and economic center. Fernando knew the monastery well, having visited it several times, the first time with his mother in 1461, and it would remain a royal favorite over the next century. His grandson, Carlos V, would stay there no less than nine times.[153] The monastery, built in honor of the Virgin Mary, hosts "La Moreneta"—a Romanesque "black Madonna" that was eventually hailed as the patroness of Catalonia in the late nineteenth century. But as a prosperous religious community, Montserrat had economic and political influence even in the Middle Ages. For instance, during the Catalan Civil War (1462–72) the monastery opposed Fernando's father, Joan II, and his royalist faction, siding instead with the Catalan *corts,* and the ill-fated heir apparent, Joan's eldest son, Carles (Carlos) de Viana. It was perhaps as a consequence of this that Fernando and Isabel were determined to reform the abbey. When the royal couple came to Barcelona in August 1492 for a stay that would last

150. Bouwsma, "Two Faces of Humanism," 25 and 46–47.

151. Molekamp, "Early Modern Women," 68. As Mazzola and Abate state in more general terms, "Early modern developments of Humanism, capitalism, and Protestantism encouraged a more dramatic segregation at an earlier stage [before the eighteenth century] by codifying patriarchy and thereby confining women more to separate spheres." Mazzola and Abate, "Introduction," 3.

152. San Benito de Valladolid, founded in 1390, counted on the support of several Castilian monarchs, notably Juan I, Enrique III, and Juan II. It took a leading role in the monastic reform of fifteenth-century Castile. See García-Villoslada, *Historia de la Iglesia,* 3-1:247–48; Colombas, *Un reformador benedictino.*

153. Carreres, "Visites," 352 and 355.

until January 1494, they visited Montserrat several times, prompting the king to remark on the "innate devotion that We have to that holy house."[154]

They were not the first to set themselves to the task, however, and their efforts should be seen as a reprise of those undertaken by Maria de Castilla, Alfons the Magnanimous's queen, and his lieutenant general (1420–23) and lieutenant of Catalonia (1432–58). Fernando's plan was not only to reform Montserrat itself, but to set it up as an example and inspiration for other religious houses in his realms, "so that, without a doubt, once reformed and having been made observant, it will be an example for all of those of the kingdoms of Aragon, and will prompt them with greater facility to lead themselves to do the same."[155] Initially, he considered transferring monks from the congregation of Santa Justina or from other Catalan foundations to Montserrat, but instead he settled on bringing in reforming clergy from Castile. This was a strategy that he applied broadly in his territories, and that was a catalyst for the extension and entrenchment of Castilian language and culture in Catalan lands. Not surprisingly, such an intervention would be resisted, and as a consequence the abbot of Montserrat, Joan de Peralta, was removed (appointed instead to the Diocese of Vic, as bishop).[156] It was a consequence of this that in 1493 García Jiménez de Cisneros and twelve of his monks from Valladolid took over the community of Montserrat, which from that time forward became, for all intents and purposes—both spiritually and economically—a subsidiary of the Benedictine congregation of Valladolid. He would serve as abbot until 1510.[157]

When the new abbot arrived at Montserrat, he found he had inherited a rich library, in the collection of which were the works of Francesc Eiximenis, and specifically, the *Llibre de les dones* and the *Scala Dei* or *Devocionari de la Reina Maria*.[158] Both books would be in print in Catalan within two years of his arrival, and perhaps because of his support. Jean Rosenbach published the *Llibre de les dones* in 1495 (fig. 5), and Diego Gumiel the *Scala Dei* in 1494,

154. Ibid., 354. See also Torre y del Cerro, "Algunos datos," 18 and 37; ACA: CR, Reg. 3608, f. 96 (Vitoria, 7 October 1483). Fernando is writing to his lieutenant, Enric.

155. Torre y del Cerro, "Algunos datos," 21. Regarding the previous reform, see Collell, "Vingueren a Montserrat."

156. Torre y del Cerro, "Algunos datos," 6.

157. Carreres, "Visites," 355. Also in 1510 another monk from Montserrat, Bernat de Boyl, and twelve more companions (perhaps also from Montserrat) accompanied Columbus on his second trip to the Caribbean.

158. In an inventory of the library of the monastery of Montserrat in 1500 a few of Eiximenis books are listed: the *Book of Angels,* the *Scala Dei,* the *Dotzè of the Christian,* the *Pastorale,* and the *Vita Christi*. See Albareda, "Intorno alla scuola," 308.

and again in 1501 and 1523.[159] We cannot be sure whether García Jiménez first read the two works here in Catalan, or in one of the translations that were already in circulation in Castile. In fact, he may have availed himself of Isabel's 1492 translation of the *Llibre de les dones,* given that she was in Barcelona and visited Montserrat just as Cisneros was taking over. Most likely she had the opportunity to talk to him in person—perhaps about Eiximenis.

Whatever the case, the abbot was clearly taken by the friar's work, particularly as regards contemplation; for when he set himself to write his own book of spiritual exercises, Cisneros borrowed heavily from it. Indeed, he reused examples that Eiximenis used, and simply translated several chapters of the *Scala Dei.*[160] There is an obvious and undeniable intertextuality between the two works, which, in any case, share the same Christian tradition of writing. Keith Whinnom has suggested as other sources for his *Exercitatorio* Mombaer's *Rosetum exercitiorum spiritualium* and Gerad of Zutphen's *Tractatus de spiritualibus ascensionibus.*[161] Cisneros was not merely establishing an intertextual dialogue with Eiximenis through citation, allusion, and influence; he appropriated Eiximenis's work without citing him as a source, or figure of authority. Nowadays, we would call this plagiarism, but as Lawrence Venuti might say, as a translator Cisneros was "domesticating" Eiximenis's text, preserving some elements, while rejecting others.[162] In any event, our concept of plagiarism is modern, and it would be anachronistic to apply it to the Middle Ages; if Cisneros did not attribute what he borrowed from Eiximenis, it was probably because he did not consider the friar to be a well-known or important authority (as Hernando de Talavera, for example, evidently did).

The section of the *Scala Dei* and the *Llibre de les dones* that Cisneros found most inspiring was the *Tractat de la contemplació,* which figured in both works in fundamentally identical form. In 1960 Cebrià Baraut, a scholar and monk of Montserrat, compared the *Exercitatorio* with the 1494 printing of the *Scala Dei,* and demonstrated Eiximenis's influence on Cisneros's work.[163] This can be seen in the abbot's borrowing of the friar's three ways of reaching God—the *via purgativa, illuminative,* and *unitiva*—and the structure of their

159. See these editions at BC: Reserva, Inc. 91-8 (*Scala Dei,* 1494); 11-VI-8 (*Scala Dei,* 1523), Bon. 10-VI-34 (*Llibre de les dones,* 1495).

160. See an overview of medieval translation and adaptation in Pratt, "Medieval Attitudes," 1–12; and Campbell and Mills, *Rethinking Medieval Translation,* 1–16.

161. Whinnom, "The Supposed Sources," 46–47.

162. Venuti, *The Scandals of Translation,* 84.

163. Baraut, "L'*Exercitatorio de la vida spiritual,*" 234 and 236–54; and Viera, "The Presence of Francesc Eiximenis," 1. On the contrary, Clausell believes that Cisneros used a Spanish copy of the *Libro de las donas,* rather than a Catalan version as a source. Clausell, *CD,* 19.

essays.[164] Both admonish the believer not to spend too much time focusing on his or her own sins, so as to avoid recreating the sin (particularly carnal sins) per se. Both use exactly the same metaphor, "the file that hones iron," to evoke how these exercises help to eliminate sin.[165] Each begs perseverance in the reader, noting that such purgative spiritual exercises that one must undergo before embarking on the illuminative path require time as well as effort: one month, according to Cisneros, and two, for Eiximenis.[166] Their recommendations for prayer and contemplation are also identical—prayer is to be carried out at night, with adequate time set aside to follow a properly structured program of meditation.[167] In a similar fashion, this coincides with Observant Franciscans' method of methodic prayer or *recogimiento,* which was intended to achieve closeness to God, and was further developed by fifteenth-century Castilian authors such as Bernardino de Laredo, Francisco de Osuna, and Bernarbé de Palma, who transformed it into a program of "recollection mysticism."[168]

By comparing the two texts, Baraut shows several substantial sections of the *Exercitatorio* are nothing more than translations into Castilian of parts of the *Scala Dei.* For example, chapter 28 of the *Exercitatorio* is a translation of chapter 17 of the *Scala Dei.* The original reads: "And this is why Saint Dionysius says, in the aforesaid definition that he provides, that such Wisdom is known through Ignorance, since no human knowledge, nor reason, nor understanding, prepares one for the Contemplative, since this capacity comes from God alone."[169] On the other hand, Cisneros writes: "This is why according to Saint Dionysius, such Wisdom is known through Ignorance, since no human reason, nor understanding, nor knowledge, prepares the Meditator ("the Exerciser") for such a Union, because such a Union and feeling come from God alone."[170]

Likewise, chapter 18 of the *Scala Dei,* "How High Contemplation Feels More and Loves More Than That Which Is Understood or Seen," is translated in the *Exercitatorio* as chapter 29, "The Exerciser Feels More and Loves More That Which Is Not Understood or Seen."[171] Eiximenis's chapter 19, "What Degree of Which Acts and Purges Provoke This Unitive

164. For example, Bernardino de Laredo's *Subida al Monte Sión* (*Ascent of Mount Zion;* c. 1535), a work that was consonant with the ideals of the Franciscan Observant movement, designated three stages of mystical union: self-knowledge or self-annihilation, passionate spirituality, and recollection. See Boon, *The Mystical Science,* 3. See also Melquíades Andrés, *Los recogidos,* 89–90.

165. Baraut, "L'*Exercitatorio de la vida spiritual,*" 237.

166. Ibid., 239.

167. Ibid., 242.

168. Boon, *The Mystical Science,* 13 and 187 n. 68.

169. Baraut, "L'*Exercitatorio de la vida spiritual,*" 242.

170. Ibid., 246.

171. Ibid., 253–55.

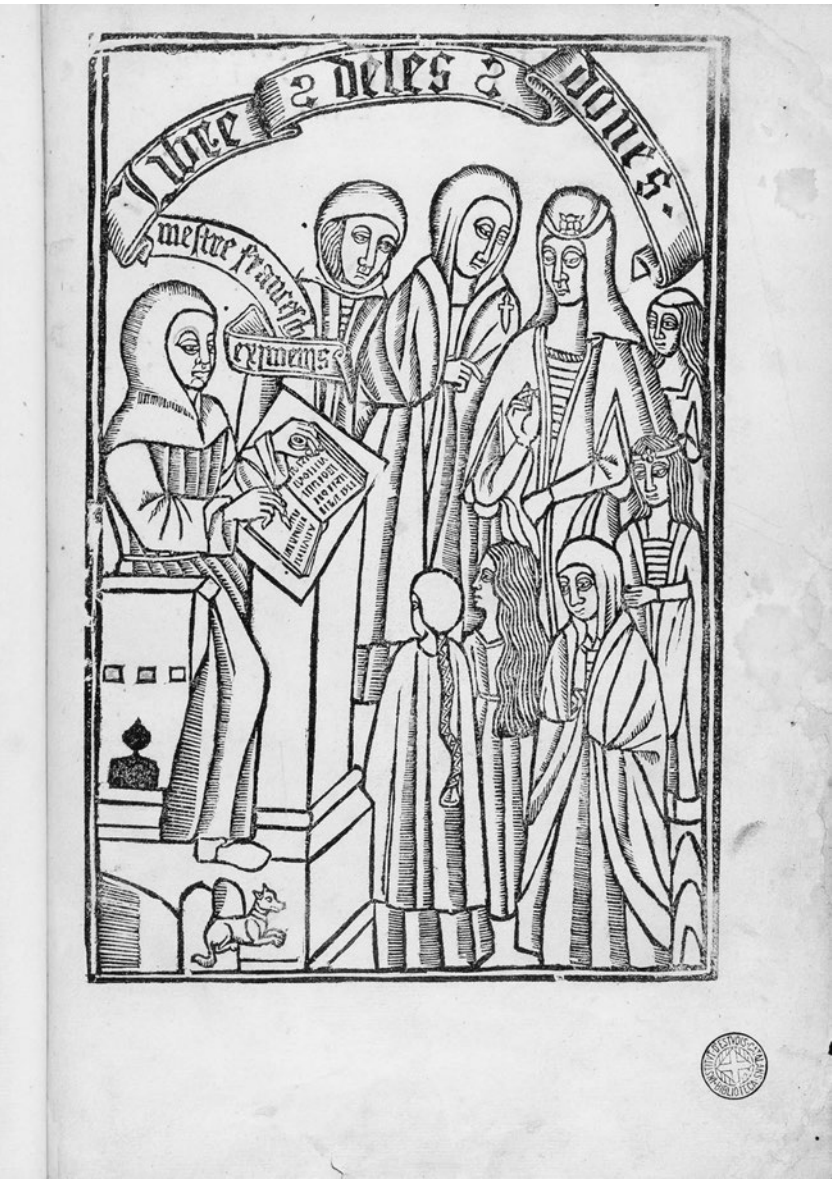

Figure 5. Cover illustration from an incunabula *Llibre de les dones* (Barcelona: Iohan Rosenbach, 1495). BC: 11-7-V. Copyright © Biblioteca de Catalunya, Barcelona.

Contemplation within the Soul of the Penitent," forms part of Cisneros's chapter 30, "Which Acts and to What Degree Provoke This Holy and Perfective, Unitive Love in the Soul of the Exerciser and Devout Male," as does chapter 20 of the *Scala Dei,* "Now the Aforesaid Purges and the Degrees Thereof Engender in the Meditator the Absence of Thought and Great Serenity."[172] Chapter 9 of the *Scala Dei,* "Signs, Persuasions, Acts, and Efforts Leading to the Comtemplative, and How They Are Followed," became chapter 24 of the *Exercitatorio,* "Regarding Certain Signs That Warn the Exerciser When He Is Guilty of That Which by Negligence Leads Him Away from the Aforesaid Exercises."[173] The parts of Cisneros's book that are not lifted from or directly inspired by Eiximenis deal with related themes, with a heavy emphasis on methodical prayer, and the study of the psalms, moral theology, and preaching.

No sooner had Cisneros completed the *Exercitatorio* than he lobbied for it to become the training manual for novitiates entering his order.[174] Whereas Eiximenis's books had been aimed in particular at women, Cisneros's work was intended for monks; nevertheless, like his Franciscan predecessor's books, the *Exercitatorio* soon found a broader lay and clerical readership. Its impact was magnified by the fact that it became popular in an era when monastic reform was emerging as a priority. Hence, it was produced not only at Montserrat, but also at Cisneros's original community of Valladolid, and subsequently, was reprinted in Seville (Cromberger, 1534), Medina del Campo (Castro, 1547), and Paris (Petit, 1511), in Latin. In 1557 an Italian translation was produced and dedicated to Vittoria Francese della Rovere, Duchess of Urbino. The first French version was printed in Paris in 1655. In addition, the work was printed in Ingolstadt (Bavaria) in 1591, Krakow (Poland) in 1601, Douay (northern France) in 1615, and Cologne in 1644.[175] And just as the impact of Eiximenis's work was amplified through adaptation, Cisneros's ideas reached new audiences thanks to a revision, *Compendio de exercicios espirituales* (*Compendium of Spiritual Exercises*), produced by an anonymous monk of Montserrat.[176] The monk in question was probably Cisneros's disciple Pedro de Burgos, who succeeded him as abbot of Montserrat (1512–36). The *Compendio,* first published c. 1520 (and subsequently in 1555, 1564,

172. Ibid.

173. Ibid., 261.

174. Albareda, "Intorno alla scuola," 272.

175. Ibid., 287–88.

176. BC: Reserva, Llibre Antic, Mar. 67-12, *Compendio breve de exercicios espirituales* (*A Brief Compendium of Spiritual Exercises*).

1580, 1630, 1633, 1647, and 1750), was a simplified abridgment intended for pilgrims and visitors to Montserrat, and soon became a very popular text among laypeople in the Iberian Peninsula, Italy, and France.[177] As Anselmo Albareda points out, the *Exercitatorio* came to be broadly appreciated across Europe, not only in the early modern period, but right up into the twentieth century.

Thus, through the mediation of figures like Cisneros and his other adapters and translators, Eiximenis became the conduit between late fourteenth-century Catalan spirituality and the devotional literature of fifteenth-century Castile. Moreover, he is revealed as a missing link between the earliest stirrings of contemplative piety that sparked the emergence of the *Devotio moderna* in the peninsula, and the culminating figures of this tradition of spiritual renewal—notably (Saint) Ignatius of Loyola. The latter underwent his own experience of conversion, transforming himself from a worldly nobleman and knight of northern Spain into the author of his own *Spiritual Exercises,* and the founder of the revolutionary reforming order, the Jesuits, or Order of Jesus, in 1540. His visit to Montserrat, twenty-three years after Cisneros published his *Exercises,* was a key event in the shaping of his own experience and work.[178] At that point, of course, the influence of Eiximenis on the devotional practices advocated by Cisneros had been forgotten, and it is more than a little ironic that the works that this fourteenth-century Catalan friar wrote for laywomen, like Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós and Maria de Luna, became the foundation for both Cisneros's and Loyola's programs for reforming clerical male devotion. The Jesuits never even developed a feminine branch.

In sum, despite his apparent obscurity, Eiximenis cast a long shadow over the spiritual, moral, and political landscape of early modern Europe. If Isabel the Catholic's concept of queenship can in a way be traced to Maria de Luna and Francesc Eiximenis, they take on the appearance of earlier figures in a literary and cultural genealogy that—if we accept it—invites a reconsideration of commonly held notions regarding the relationship between peninsular kingdoms, their political models and (proto-)"national" literatures, as well as what ought to constitute the medieval literary "canon." In practice, both Maria and Isabel pursued similar strategies for neutralizing and utilizing the

177. Albareda, "Intorno alla scuola," 285 and 293–94. Pedro de Burgos authored the *Libro de la historia y milagros hechos a invocación de nuestra Señora de Montserrat* (*Book of the History and the Miracles Made at the Invocation of Our Lady of Montserrat;* Barcelona: Petrus Botin, 1550) in order to inspire the faithful to get closer to God through the Virgin Mary. See his prologue, in BC: Reserva, Llibre antic, Bon 10-III-17, proemio, 1.

178. Leturia, "La *Devotio Moderna,*" 73–88; and Leturia, "Lecturas ascéticas," 23.

anxiety that the emergence of a powerful, independent, authoritative woman generated in the patriarchal culture of their time. Each employed epistolary humility as a discursive strategy to fashion themselves as acceptable female sovereigns. Both not only survived, but also came to be regarded as paragons of queenly virtue, both by their contemporaries and by posterity. They fashioned themselves deliberately as pious, faithful wives and dedicated mothers. By projecting a persona that would calm the anxieties that their authority provoked, these queens were better able—as a consequence—to exercise that authority.[179] Indeed, Isabel went far beyond Maria in this respect, commissioning many literary works intended to justify her position and reinforce her virtuous, feminine image. As Guardiola-Griffiths argues, Isabel became an active patroness of cultural production in order to promote her own legitimacy.[180]

And thus, it was thanks to books such as those written by Eiximenis and his Castilian successors that queens like Isabel and Maria, along with many others, were able to understand the rules of the patriarchal game, and play it successfully. Those women who strayed from this model, like Maria's predecessors, Sibil·la de Fortià and Violant de Bar, and Isabel's heiress, Juana of Castile, were cast aside and disqualified. Sibil·la and Violant lived out their last years as royal hangers-on, whereas Juana was transformed into *La Loca* (the Mad)—sequestered in a palace at Tordesillas for the duration of her reign. At the time, Juana's supposed insanity was held to be the result of the unexpected death of her young husband, Philip the Handsome.[181]A Flemish traveler who journeyed to Spain in 1506 recorded the common wisdom when he described Juana's love for her husband as "passionate and excessive love." Even before she returned from her life in Flanders to take the throne in Spain, worrying reports that she was neglecting her religious obligations because of her obsession with her husband had made their way back to Castile. Alfonso Martínez de Toledo, the "archpriest of Talavera," and author of *Corbacho,* the best-known misogynistic book in the medieval Castilian tradition, emphasized that love and sexuality were like sicknesses, whereas Eiximenis belabored the importance of devotional discipline and pious exercise. The works of both authors were in her own and her mother's library, but at that point Queen Juana could not even pretend to

179. Weissberger, citing Breitenberg and Freud, defines anxiety as a "particular state of expecting the danger or preparing for it, even though it may be an unknown one." Weissberger, *Isabel Rules,* xv.

180. Guardiola-Griffiths, *Legitimizing the Queen,* 12–14.

181. See chapter 5.

follow Eiximenis's advice on womanhood.[182] That certainly was not true of her younger daughter, Catalina. The princess lived in Tordesillas with her mother until she left for Portugal to marry King João III and was herself given a new and modernized version of Eiximenis's *Libro de las donas* for her education and edification.

182. In *Corbacho* (1438) the archpriest of Talavera relates love and sexuality to sickness. In fact, Michael Solomon claims that Talavera's *Corbacho* and Jaume Roig's *Spill* are "bound in medical strategies for maintaining sexual well-being"; Solomon, *The Literature of Misogyny,* 3. See also Val Valdivieso, "El camino al trono"; and Gascón Vera, "Juana I of Castile."

Chapter 5

Eiximenis on the Atlantic

The Chariot of Ladies *and Catalina of Habsburg (Portugal, c. 1525–78)*

> And, thus, I have labored to do service to God, our Lord, and to your Royal Highness for the benefit of the Christian faithful. I have undertaken to translate a wonderful book of the Catalan language into Castilian, one which contains holy doctrine for the Christian faithful, and which was composed by the very wise and devout master, Brother Francisco Ximénez, Bishop of Elne, Patriarch of Jerusalem—a book that he addressed to Christian women.
>
> *Carro de las donas,* I:133

In 1542 Catalina of Habsburg (b. 1507, r. 1525–57, d. 1578), who was not only the wife of João III and queen of Portugal, but also happened to be the granddaughter of Isabel the Catholic, the daughter of Juana I (the Mad) of Castile, and the sister of Emperor Carlos of Spain and Germany, became the recipient of a new version of Eiximenis's *Llibre de les dones.* This Spanish-language edition was printed in Valladolid by the presses of Juan Villaquirán under the title *Carro de las donas* (*Chariot of Ladies*). Catalina was at that point a mature queen—a thirty-five-year-old woman whose childbearing years were, to her regret, behind her (fig. 6). Despite continued efforts, she had not managed to conceive and give birth since 1539. All together, she had delivered nine children—six male and three female—but, except for two, Maria Manuela (also known as Maria) and João, all of them had died in early childhood. The combination of her age, her power, and her emotional and spiritual vulnerability made her an obvious target for a Franciscan with ambitions to influence her style of queenship and gain an entré into her courtly entourage, and a book of moral advice was an excellent way to attract the queen's attention.

Catalina was all the more tempting as a beneficiary and patroness because her daughter, Maria Manuela (1527–45), was engaged to marry her double

Figure 6. Antonio Moro, portrait of Catalina of Habsburg, queen of Portugal, 1552–53. Museo del Prado: P02109. Copyright © Madrid, Museo Nacional del Prado.

cousin, Felipe, who was then Prince of Asturias, and would later reign as Felipe II of Spain. They married in 1543. This was an era in which the relationship between the Crowns of Castile and Portugal was drawing ever closer. Reflecting the endogamic tendencies that characterized the Habsburg dynasty, Catalina had been married to João III, while her brother, Emperor Carlos V, had married João's sister, Isabel. In turn, Catalina and João made

a match for their children with the children of their own siblings, Carlos V and Isabel. Hence, Maria Manuela and João would be married to their own cousins, Felipe and Juana.[1]

Catalina's era was a time of unprecedented imperial expansion for Portugal, the profits of which helped to sustain the lavish style of her court, including the purchase of her art and book collection, and her penchant for expensive exotica.[2] Over the previous half century the Portuguese had built up a veritable global empire, including possessions in territories as distant as North Africa, India, and Brazil. And Catalina had played a direct role in this; like her sister-in-law, the empress Isabel of Spain, she exercised considerable political power.[3] The queen was not only her husband's trusted adviser, but would eventually also serve as regent (1557–62) on behalf of her minor grandson Sebastião (1554–78).[4] Catalina also resembled the two previous recipients of the *Book of Women,* Maria de Luna and Isabel the Catholic, in that she had the reputation of being a devout lady, and as in the case of Maria, her husband was seen as less strong and determined than herself. Like Martí I of Aragon, who was known in his time as "the Ecclesiastic," João III was characterized as *brando e benigno* (bland and benign) and went by the epithet "the Pious."[5] Like her predecessors, Catalina was also a patroness of religious orders, dividing her attentions among the Franciscans, the Dominicans, and a new order, the Society of Jesus, or Jesuits, who had begun to establish themselves in Portugal. For the next two hundred years the Jesuits' influence would grow to the extent that they would come to replace the mendicants as royal confessors. This transition would take some time, however; Catalina began to employ Jesuits, but also used Dominicans, whereas João stuck with Franciscan confessors.[6]

This latest, anonymous author who undertook the task of adapting the text (which he called a *trasladación*) was, like Eiximenis, an Observant Franciscan. But he was writing in an age that was very different from the fourteenth

1. Mendes Drumond Braga, *Um espaço,* 59–221.

2. See an inventory of her jewelry, tapestries, and other artistic objects at Jordan, "*Verdadero padre,*" 3:3045–166; and a study, 3015–44; Jordan, *A rainha coleccionadora.*

3. Regarding Empress Isabel, see Cassoti, *Infantas de Portugal,* 223–45; and Villacorta Baños-García, *La emperatriz Isabel,* 221–45.

4. Regarding Catalina's regency, see Veloso, *D. Sebastião,* 6–57; Veríssimo Serrão, *História de Portugal,* 3:58–60; Buescu, *Catarina de Austria,* 328–82.

5. Andrada, *Crónica de D. João III,* 1250. Andrada was Felipe III of Spain's (r. 1598–1621) confessor and chronicler. Jorge Rodríguez published Andrada's chronicle in 1613 in Lisbon with the title *Crónica do muyto alto e muito poderoso Rey d'estes reynos de Portugal dom João o III d'este nome.* It was dedicated to Felipe III, and written in Portuguese; BNP: res-573-v.

6. Francisco Marqués, "Franciscanos e Dominicos," 54. See also Andrade, *Crónica de D. João III,* 1250.

century of the original work; this was a time of worldwide empires, dramatic religious reform and dissent, a literary explosion thanks to the printing press, and the active exercise of censorship (this book had to be reviewed by several ecclesiastical authorities before it could be published).[7] The adapter of the *Carro* hailed from the convent of St. Francis of Valladolid, and the congregation of the Conception, which had also been the community of García Jiménez de Cisneros, abbot of Montserrat, and an advocate of Eiximenis's ideas.[8] Valladolid was an important religious center in this period; local figures included the Franciscan tertiary and *beata* Francisca Hernández, and her group (1519–29), as well as Fadrique Enríquez and others who were influenced by the heretical tendencies of the Alumbrados. The author of the *Carro* did not sign his name to the work, but he did disclose in the prologue that he was an admirer of Eiximenis, and that at the time he completed the project in 1540 he was serving the queen of Portugal as chaplain. He also mentioned that he was ill, and that he had previously been in the entourage of Pope Adrian VI (1522–23).[9]

It was not modesty or an aversion to attention that prompted him to leave his name off of the work; it simply was not necessary for him to sign it. The people who mattered to him, and who would be the source of his influence and authority—which is to say, Queen Catalina and her entourage, the Franciscan order, and the other ecclesiastical authorities—knew who he was, and that he had written the book. He simply did not feel any need to identify himself to people beyond this circle, let alone the anonymous mass of readers created by the printing press. They were not his intended audience, and he had little to gain from their admiration. What would have been obvious to his contemporaries, however, has been the source of uncertainty in modern scholarly circles, and no fewer than three Franciscans have been credited as the hand behind the work: Luis Escobar, Alonso de Tudela, and

7. The *Carro de las donas* received several authorizations before it was printed. First, it was reviewed by the general of the Franciscans, Vicente Lunel, and Antonio de Guzmán, guardian of the House of Saint Francis in Salamanca. Guzmán asked two professors at the University of Valladolid, Valencia, and Andrés Pérez, to revise the text. Then, the provincial minister of the Franciscans, Alonso de Salvatierra, asked two Franciscans from the convent of Valladolid, Juan de Ortega and Antonio de Ledesma, to review the content once more. The latter sent a report to the Franciscan chapter that gathered in Segovia in September of 1541 saying, "This is a book of very great use and very holy doctrine for the Christian faithful" (Era libro de muy grande provecho y muy sancta doctrina para los fieles christianos). Then the chapter relayed the report to the provincial, who sent it on in turn to Alonso Enríquez, abbot of the Franciscan monastery of Valladolid, who was the one who granted the license necessary to finally publish the book in 1542.

8. In his prologue to the readers the author says that Eiximenis was an Observant Franciscan like him; *CD,* I:136. See chapter 4, above.

9. *CD,* I:133 and 138.

Father Carmona. Recently, Joan Lluís Vives has also been held up as a candidate.[10] Carmona, who was for a time confessor to Pope Adrian VI, has been put forward by Carmen Clausell Nácher, and he is the most likely candidate. Nevertheless, because of the difficulty of attributing the *Carro* to any particular Franciscan writer, in this chapter I will refer to the author in generic terms.

It is appropriate to consider him the "author," given that the Franciscan behind the *Carro* did not simply produce a new translation of Eiximenis's text from Catalan into Castilian. Times had changed, and the situation and needs of his patroness were not those of Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós or Maria de Luna. Thus, he "modernized" the work, in order to bring it in line with the expectations and requirements of an early modern audience, and specifically, of an early modern queen.[11] As he himself explained in his prologue, "Many things that [Eiximenis] had included, which are not apt for these times, have been taken out, as have advised the authorities who have read this work, and by the same token many things have been added."[12] For the most part, he maintained the tone of the original work, but addressed his text to "the Christian man," which he used as a generic term for believers of both genders.

Given that the book was adapted for Catalina with the aim of educating her daughter, Maria Manuela, the future wife of Felipe II of Spain, it comes as no surprise that the author decided to leave out most of the misogynist rants that peppered Eiximenis's text. In the section on maidens, for example, the original had focused on matters such as the nature of menstrual blood, women's disposition toward evil (as the daughters of Eve), their inconstancy, their poisonous nature, and their tendency to chatter, as well as on the moral preferability of virginity to marriage.[13] None of these were included in the revised work. Rather, like Erasmus's *Encomium matrimonii* or Vives's *Education of a Christian Woman,* the *Carro* placed the expectation of marriage on women—they were to become good wives, not virginal nuns. In other

10. Mesdeguer proposed Luis de Escobar. Messeguer Fernández, "El traductor del Carro"; Messeguer Fernández, "Documentos históricos diversos." On the other hand, Vázquez Janeiro identified Alonso de Tudela as the author. Vázquez Janeiro, "En busca de un nombre." Clausell favors Cardona; Clausell Nácher, "El P. Carmona"; and *CD,* I:93–109. Regarding Vives as a possible author of the *Carro,* see Calero, "Francesc Eiximenis y Luis Vives"; Calero, "El *Carro de las donas.*"

11. Felipe II donated four copies of the *Libro de les dones* to the library of El Escorial on 30 April 1576. *CD,* I:442; Zarco Cuevas, *Catálogo razonado,* 3:475–94.

12. *CD,* I:134. Clausell's modern edition of the *Carro* underlines all the new additions to the original text by Eiximenis. *CD,* I:71–83.

13. He eliminated chapters 11 and 30, and sections of chapters 19 and 20, of Eiximenis's *Llibre de les dones.* See also *CD,* I:27.

words, 150 years after Eiximenis composed the *Llibre de les dones,* this adaptation substantially modified it, changing, as Benjamin would put it, the "aura" of the artistic artifact.

If, as Lawrence Venuti says, translation is the "reconstruction of the foreign text in accordance with values, beliefs and representation that pre-exist in the target language . . . [and] serves as an appropriation of foreign cultures for domestic agendas, cultural, economic, political," then the anonymous Franciscan certainly "domesticated" the *Llibre.*[14] While much of the original was kept, some parts were cut, and much new material was added, particularly as regards the exemplary men and women whose lives were held up to the reader as models. This is understandable, given that his declared goal was to produce a moral guide suitable for all Christian readers, and one that would serve them "from the beginning of their life to the end of their death."[15] And whereas the *Llibre* had been intended as a spiritual "mirror" for pious women through each stage of their lives, the much broader *Carro* was aimed more at married laypeople—reflecting the shift toward active lay piety characteristic of the age of the Reformation (see table 3). The friar also took care to tailor the examples he included to suit Catalina's tastes and inclinations—after all, this was a work of patronage, and his aim was to please the queen. Hence, he looked for models who would be seen as relevant to the queen's experience: virtuous Castilian women related to her, like Isabel the Catholic and her daughters, and important noblewomen recognized for their piety, in this case, Teresa de Quiñones and Teresa Enríquez (who were also related to Ferdinand the Catholic). Nor did he forget his old master, Pope Adrian VI. By holding him up as a paragon of virtue, the author was not only reminding the queen and his other readers of his own stature, but was also demonstrating his loyalty to those he served. Other figures he evoked included Hernando de Talavera and Cardinal Cisneros—who, despite their rivalry, were united by Eiximenis's new adapter.[16]

The *Carro* was not the only work by Eiximenis that is documented in contemporary Portuguese library collections, but it is the only one that is clearly attributed to him.[17] Thus, in this final chapter I will argue that

14. Venuti, "Translation as Social Practice," 196.

15. *CD,* I:140.

16. Other exemplary figures he added in chapter 42 included the Dominican Deza, archbishop of Seville; Juan de Talavera; Alonso Fonseca; Juan Fonseca, founder of the Franciscan Province of Los Angeles; the Dominican friar Juan Hurtado; and the Count of Benavente and his son, both of whom took up the Franciscan habit. *CD,* I:27 n. 73.

17. King Manuel I's book inventory shows that he had a *Vita Christi* (the author is not named) and the *Natura angélica;* Viterbo, *A livraria real,* 16, doc. 31; 17, doc. 38. Queen Catalina also had the

Table 3. The Structure of the Carro de las donas

*__Prologue/Dedication to Queen Catalina of Portugal__

*__Prologue to the General Reader__

*__Prologue/Introduction__

Book One: Book of the Maidens: On children (up to 12 years) and young females and males (12 to 20 years)

*includes the biographies of Pope Hadrian, Adrian VI, Fray Hernando de Talavera, Cardinal Cisneros (chaps. 39–42), and other less notable religious figures

Book Two: On Marriage

*includes Isabel the Catholic and her four daughters as examples (chaps. 61–67)

†**Book Three: On Widowhood**

*includes Teresa de Quiñones (chaps. 22–23) and Teresa Enríquez (chaps. 24–25) and mentions other noble ladies as examples

Book Four: *Summo bien* or *Vita Christianorum* (*The Greatest Good*, or *The Life of Christians*)

- Theological and cardinal virtues
- Ten Commandments
- Seven deadly sins
- Preparation for confession
- Three parts of penance (fasting, alms, and praying)
- Explanation of the Pater Noster

Book Five: *Memoria eterna y aparejo para la muerte (*Eternal Memory and Preparation for Death*)

- includes a prologue/dedication, and afterword dedicated to Queen Catalina

* = Original sections written for this edition

† = Combines Eiximenis's text with material taken from Vives

analyzing the changes that were made to the *Llibre de les dones/Libro de las donas* as it was transformed into the *Carro de las donas* provides a means for assessing the evolution of gender discourse and court culture in the Iberian Peninsula from the Middle Ages to the early modern period. It can help to clarify and nuance long-standing questions, such as Joan Kelly's "Did women have a Renaissance?," and can help us gauge how changes in what Hans Robert Jauss referred to as the "horizon of expectations" contributed to the reconfiguration of the text.[18] It also provides a means for appreciating the transformation in religious culture over these centuries, as well as the changing role of patronage and character of queenship. The changes the author made reflect his perceptions of what Catalina needed in a book of this sort, and his use of Isabel the Catholic and her daughters as exempla is

Natura angélica, and among her many religious books she also had a copy of the *Cartujano* in Spanish (Viterbo, *A livraria real,* 31 and 34 [docs. 33, 35 and 44]).

18. Kelly, "Did Women Have a Renaissance?," 19–50. For my position, see the conclusion.

also revealing, as is the fact that he chose to produce a book intended for the royal court of Portugal in the language of Castile.[19]

Catalina of Habsburg Rides the *Chariot of Ladies*

The front cover of the 1542 edition of the *Carro de las donas* features an engraving in black and white (fig. 7). At the top of the page stand two friars, blithely indifferent to the swarming putti and the unfurling baroque scrolls and lush vegetation that surround them. On either side of them squats a large celestial globe, and between them a shield with the arms of Portugal on one side and that of Castile and Léon on the other—an illustration of the harmony between both Crowns that Catalina of Habsburg represented so well. They are standing on a roof supported by a row of columns, under which passes—in the main body of the illustration—a cart crowded with women and men dressed in the garb of the upper classes. The two horses drawing this sturdy chariot are rearing up in alarm, as Death—in the form of a beaming skeleton brandishing an hourglass and armed with a scythe—has leapt onto their backs, and is charging grinning toward the unwitting or indifferent passengers. This is an illustration referring to the last section of the book, which deals with death and how to best prepare for it—one of the innovations of this author. The chariot itself is an allegory: its four wheels symbolize zeal for God, love of neighbor, affection and compassion, and devotion and contemplation. The horses that pull the chariot represent memory of the benefices given to us by God, and hope.[20] Below, four lines of Gothic miniscule read: "*This devout book is called Chariot of the Ladies.* It deals with the life and death of the Christian Man. *It is dedicated to the Most Christian Queen of Portugal, Lady Catherina, our lady.* It is comprised of five books of great and holy doctrine."[21]

The choice of a new title was both dramatic and deliberate, and was a conscious attempt to broaden the readership of the text by addressing it to "the Christian Man," and not just to "ladies." The author presents this, however, as a clarification, rather than an innovation, given that "this Doctor [Eiximenis] titled this book as if for women, but for the most part, he speaks to men."[22] Indeed, he suggests that another appropriate title would have been

19. See the very comprehensive study of the medieval Portuguese court, its cliques, and functioning in Costa Gomes, *The Making of a Court Society.*

20. *CD,* I:140–41.

21. "*This devout book is called "The Chariot of the Ladies.*" It concerns the life and death of the Christian man. *It is dedicated to the most Christian Queen of Portugal, Lady Catherina, our lady.* It consists of five books of great and holy doctrine." The parts in italics are printed in red ink, while the rest of the text is in black.

22. *CD,* I:133.

Figure 7. Opening page of the *Carro de las donas* (Valladolid: Juan de Villaquirán, 1542). BC: 12-VI-42. Copyright © Biblioteca de Catalunya, Barcelona.

the *Book of Christian Life* (*Libro de la vida christiana*).[23] In the end, he settled on the present title, he explains, on the rationale that "*Carro* refers to 'exalting' or 'establishing'; because the Christian who maintains Christian law and

23. *CD,* I:134.

doctrine as it is explained in this book exalts God in His glory, and establishes himself in it forever."[24]

The first editorial casualty of this new edition was Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, Countess of Prades—the woman who had originally inspired Eiximenis. In previous adaptations, including the more literal fifteenth-century Castilian versions, Sanxa had been the subject of the book's prologue.[25] In sixteenth-century Portugal, however, she was an obscure and forgotten figure, and so was replaced by the book's new patroness, Catalina. In fact, the Portuguese friar wrote no less than three prologues to replace the one he had removed. The first was a dedicatory essay addressed to his queen, and the second was written for the general readership—the new author was aware that thanks to the printing press, this book would reach a wide and diverse audience. The third prologue serves as a sort of general introduction to the book and the topics it discusses.

The first of the new prologues is rather long, totaling eight pages in the 1542 edition (ten pages in the modern one). Both the text and the paratextual elements leave no doubt as to whom the book is dedicated: "To the Most Christian, Very High and Very Powerful Lady, Lady Catalina, Queen of Portugal."[26] This was not merely sycophantic hyperbole—even in her own lifetime, Catalina had the reputation of being both very Catholic and very powerful. Contemporaries, like the Castilian ambassador, Lope Hurtado de Mendoza, had no doubt of this; as he remarked, "The king receives all of the advice he gets at the queen's house."[27] In 1544 Mendoza reported to Carlos V: "I found the king and the queen together, because they are together most days from the time they have lunch until the king goes off to have dinner and sleep. The king holds all his council meetings at the house of the queen."[28] Likewise, the friar Luís de Sousa wrote, "For her great virtues and rare understanding, [the queen] has attained so much authority before the king, that even in the most important matters related to the kingdom he has absolute

24. This fragment is located in the introduction to the reader. *CD,* I:140.

25. In the fifteenth-century translation of the *Llibre de les dones* it reads: "Here begins the book called 'of Women,' composed and arranged by the master Francisco Ximénez of the Order of the Lesser Friars (Franciscans), at the request of the honorable and great lord, Lady Sancha Ramires of Arenós, Countess of Prados." For example, see BC: BH, Ms. 153, Francisco Ximénez, *Libro llamado de las donas*. On the other hand, the translation into Spanish of his *Llibre dels àngels* (also known as *De natura angélica, Devoción de los ángeles,* and *Libro de los santos ángeles*) was more literal and not dedicated to a new patron; therefore Eiximenis's old dedication to Pere d'Artès, the *mestre racional* of King Joan I, remained. He was called "Mosen Per" in the Spanish version; BNE: Inc. 620, Eiximenis, *Libro de los santos ángeles* (Burgos: Fadrique de Basilea, 1490).

26. *CD,* I:127.

27. Marçal Lourenço, "O séquito e a casa de D. Catarina," 179.

28. Cited by Buescu, *Catarina de Austria,* 252.

confidence in her opinion."[29] In other words, contemporary witnesses agree that the queen was "very much loved by the king," and they shared a strong bond of common understanding.[30]

The author of the *Carro* situates Catalina within the genealogy of prestigious queens of Portugal—this at a time when to praise the queens of Portugal was also to praise the princesses of Castile, given their thoroughly entangled roots. The Portuguese and the Castilian royal families had been intermarrying for generations. The fact that the two kingdoms were next to each other and shared a common dynastic origin in the figure of Alfonso VI of Castile and Léon (r. 1072–1109) made for fierce competition—a rivalry that was played out both on the battlefield and through strategic marital alliances. Catalina, for example, was a Portuguese queen who came from Castile, while her husband (and cousin), João III, was the son of another Castilian, María de Aragón, who was Catalina's aunt.[31] The example of Manuel I (r. 1495–1521), João III's father, is even more striking. Manuel married three times; his first two wives, Isabel of Aragon and María of Aragon, were both daughters of the Catholic Kings, while his third, Leonor of Habsburg, was Fernando and Isabel's granddaughter.[32] King Afonso V (r. 1438–77) married twice; his second wife was Castilian: Juana "la Beltraneja," the rightful heir of Enrique IV and the defeated rival of Isabel the Catholic. It was as a consequence of this marriage that Afonso claimed the title of King of Castile, and launched his unsuccessful war against the Catholic Kings. Duarte I (r. 1433–38), for his part, wedded Elionor of Aragon, a daughter of Ferran d'Antequera, the first Trastámaran ruler of Aragon. Pedro I (r. 1357–67) of Portugal married three Castilian ladies, Blanca de Castile, Constanza de Peñafiel, and Inés de Castro, two of whom were related to the Castilian royal line. Afonso IV (r. 1325–57) married Beatriz of Castile (the daughter of Sancho IV of Castile), while Afonso III's (r. 1248–79) second wife was Beatriz of Castile, the illegitimate daughter of Alfonso X the Learned. The kings of Castile also frequently chose Portuguese princesses as their mates, including Mafalda, queen consort (r. 1215–16) of Enrique I (r. 1214–17); Constanza (r. 1302–12), the wife of Fernando IV (r. 1295–1312); Maria (r. 1328–50), the wife of Alfonso XI (1312–50); Beatriz (r. 1383–90), the wife of Juan I (r. 1379–90); Isabel (r. 1447–54), the second wife of Juan II (r. 1406–54); Joana (r. 1455–74), the wife of Enrique IV (r. 1454–74); Isabel

29. Marçal Lourenço, "O séquito e a casa de D. Catarina," 179; and Sousa, *Anais,* 2:216.

30. Sousa, *Anais,* 2:205.

31. Mendes Drumond Braga, *Um espaço,* 37–46; Nogales Rincón, "Los proyectos matrimoniales hispano-portugueses."

32. For a biographical study of King Manuel's wives, see Guimarães, *Rainhas consortes D. Manuel I.*

(r. 1526–39), the wife of Carlos V; and Maria Manuela (r. 1527–35), who married the then-Prince of Asturias, and future king, Felipe II.

Indeed, the list of Luso-Castilian marriages is so long that in the prologue the friar excuses himself for not having space to heap the praise they deserve on all of the queens of Portugal, and that therefore he has chosen only a few of them, together with a few kings (reflecting the less-gendered orientation of this work). The queens he compares Catalina to include Urraca (1187–1220), daughter of Alfonso VIII of Castile and wife of Afonso II of Portugal; Saint Isabel (r. 1288–1325, d. 1336), a Portuguese queen of Aragonese origin; and Leonor of Viseu, the wife of João II (r. 1481–95), who was herself the daughter of a Castilian princess. These queens were singled out as praiseworthy either because of their close connection to and patronage of the Franciscan order (and as a consequence they appear in the Franciscan chronicles that our friar used as a source for his research), or because they had some connection to the present monarchs.[33] Urraca, for example, had taken care of the remains of five Franciscan missionaries who were martyred while preaching in Muslim Morocco. After their bodies were recovered, she buried them with full honors at the monastery of the Holy Cross in Coimbra. Recalling Urraca was particularly relevant because at the time the *Carro* was being written João III had ordered expensive silver sarcophagi to be made for the five martyred friars.[34] Isabel of Aragon was chosen because she fairly epitomized the notion of a "holy queen." She had been very close to the Franciscan order, and had recently been canonized (in 1516, with the support of Manuel I).[35] Isabel, the daughter of Pere II of Aragon (1276–85) and Costanza of Sicily, had reigned as queen of Portugal by virtue of her marriage to King Dinis. After his death in 1325, the dowager queen joined the Third Order of Saint Francis, and dedicated her life to helping the poor, living out her last years in the monastery of Santa Clara-a-Velha, which she had founded in Coimbra. The third model queen, Leonor of Viseu, was one of the few native queens that Portugal ever had; she is also evoked as a patroness of the Franciscans, and as the founder of the Clarissan convent in Lisbon where she lived and died. She is the last Portuguese queen discussed by the author; in book 2, Catalina's aunts, Isabel and María—both daughters of the Catholic Kings—are held up as exemplary figures.[36]

33. *CD,* I:129–31.
34. *CD,* I:129.
35. *CD,* I:129–30.
36. *CD,* I:130.

However, the author also used more direct strategies to ingratiate himself with Catalina. Thus, in the prologues of the *Carro* we also find the usual *captatio benevolentiae* formulas. The friar tells Catalina that his work is no more than a "poor service" (*pobre servicio*) to her, and that he hopes that the "very Christian Queen" (*Cristianísima reyna*)—one who is superior to all of her predecessors—will appreciate his work and his good character. Understanding the close nature of Catalina and João's relationship, he lays it on no less thick for the king. Whereas João III's kinsmen and predecessors, João I, João II, and Manuel I, are held up as prodigies, the present king is lauded as the best of all. He is described as the most religious, the most virtuous, and the one with the best chapel—an untiring champion of God, the church, and Christianity. Pious and just, he "spends the greater part of his time in virtuous labors, and in the service of God and the good rule of his kingdoms."[37] In sum, both João and Catalina "burn with the zeal to honor and service God, in which they are an example, so that all of their subjects may do the same.[38]

In the prologue, the Franciscan also explains how he started conceiving of editing the *Carro,* long before he met Queen Catalina. The project had its genesis twenty years earlier, in 1522, when he was in Tarragona, preparing to travel to Rome with Pope Hadrian VI. It was there that a certain Cisterer, one of the pope's secretaries, who was a native of the city, offered Hadrian a copy of Eiximenis's original *Llibre de les dones* as a gift. According to the author, the pope was quite taken by the book: "He praised it highly, and said that it was wonderful doctrine, and that all Christian kings needed to have a copy of this book."[39] Hearing this, our Franciscan determined to undertake the task of translating it into Castilian. It was a long process, which was not completed until 1540, at which time he was serving as a chaplain in Portugal in the service of Catalina. It was published two years later. In fact, he probably waited until then because he needed a powerful patroness to dedicate the work to, to ensure its success, and to maximize the benefit to himself—this was an age in which the only "royalty payments" authors received were payments they received from actual royalty or other patrons. Not only was there the issue of censorship to contend with, but setting the type for a large publication was a laborious, expensive project. Having a powerful and politically connected sponsor was also a way to get a book in print, and at this moment, the influence of Catalina in Portugal and in Spain (here, through

37. *CD,* I:133.
38. *CD,* I:133.
39. *CD,* I:134.

the medium of her daughter) was on the rise.[40] Hence, in the prologue the friar directly requests that the queen "order the book to be printed." And so it came to pass; whether as a result of Catalina's intervention or otherwise, the first four books of the *Carro* were printed on 27 June 1542, and the fifth book on 19 July of the same year.[41] As it was, Catalina turned out to be the ideal patroness, in terms of both her own needs and those of the friar.

Parallel Lives

Catalina was born on 15 January 1507, and two weeks later she was baptized by no less a figure than Francisco Jiménez de Cisneros, archbishop of Toledo.[42] One could hardly imagine a grander or more imperial pedigree; Catalina's grandparents on her mother's side were Isabel of Castile and Fernando of Aragon, and on her father's, the Holy Roman Emperor Maximilian I and Marie, Duchess of Burgundy. Catalina was the daughter of Juana, heiress apparent of Aragon, Navarre, and Naples, and who held the title of Queen of Castile by her own right. Her father was Philip the Handsome, whose death four months before her birth had precipitated the disastrous and debilitating melancholy that rendered Juana unfit to rule. Juana "the Mad" was forced into seclusion in Tordesillas, where she would live out her remaining thirty-nine years, and it was in this palace-prison that Catalina spent the first eighteen years of her life, always by her mother's side—her companion and consolation. And it was here that Catalina was educated; she learned Spanish, Latin, and some music, and was taught dancing by a Portuguese tutor, Francisco Deza, during the five months he spent in Tordesillas in 1519.[43] Her mother's accounting registers also show that Fray Juan de Villa taught her how to read, using books of devotion.[44] A few more books were bought for the princess, among them a vocabulary by Nebrija and a *Summa angélica* that most likely was Eiximenis's *Natura angélica*.[45] We must assume that she also had access to her mother's library—a collection that remained with her in Tordesillas, and included Eiximenis's *Libro de las donas.*

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40. In her biography of Catalina, Buescu points out how the queen's influence on the king grew through the 1530s, and even more in the 1540s. Buescu, *Catarina de Austria,* 246–47.

41. Viera, "Un estudio textual," 165; Clausell, *Carro,* 135.

42. Biographical studies of Catalina include: Llanos Torriglia, *Contribución al estudio;* and Buescu, *Catarina de Austria,* 17. See also Viaud, *Lettres des souverains,* 57–80. Jordan's study focuses on Catalina's role in culture, and as collector; see Jordan, *A rainha coleccionadora.*

43. AGS: Casa Real, legajo 16-6/1519.

44. AGS: Casa Real, legajo 16-8/768, year 1515.

45. See a list of the books bought for her at AGS: Casa Real, legajo 16-8/768, year 1521. See also Jordan, *A rainha coleccionadora,* 28–29; and Sánchez-Molero, "La bibliofília," 43–168.

But it was certainly not a typical childhood for an aristocrat or royal. She lived in isolation and relative scarcity, without the moderating influences of outside contacts or a functioning royal court, clung to and dominated by a mother who was considered mentally unbalanced by her equals. Whatever the political and personal motives may have been that prompted Juana's incarceration—her betrayal by her husband and her father, the incomprehension of her contemporaries—Juana was almost certainly mentally ill.[46] There can be no doubt that Catalina's experiences growing up in this strange and fraught environment strongly affected her view of politics, women, and their place in the world.

In fact, Catalina's early life had some parallels with that of her grandmother, Isabel the Catholic. Isabel was also raised in austerity and isolation, in her case in the castle of Arévalo (Ávila, Castile), far from the royal court, and in the company of her grandmother, Isabel de Barcelos, her brother, Alfonso, and her mother, Isabel of Portugal, the dowager of Juan II of Castile. It was an unofficial exile engineered by Enrique IV, who was Juan's son by an earlier marriage, and who had succeeded his father as king. As would be the case with Juana, the passing of her husband had left the already unstable Isabel of Portugal deeply depressed. In the words of the author of the *Carro,* she "felt such great pain at the death of her husband the king, that she fell into a great illness, from which she was never able to recover."[47] But the author also praises the young *infanta* Isabel, in whom Catalina would have recognized a kindred spirit, as a model for women in her endurance of such a difficult upbringing: "When she was of a young age, her father, King Juan II, died, and her mother was sick for the rest of her life; her brother, the king, *don* Alonso, died at fourteen years of age, and it was thus that his most excellent princess was in her youth without father and without mother, and almost without protection."[48] In other words, Catalina was like her venerated grandmother, Isabel the Catholic.

For her part, Catalina would remain with Juana until her brother, Emperor Carlos, removed her from her mother's side and arranged her marriage to

46. Much has been written regarding Juana's health problems. The most positive view of the queen suggests that her erratic behavior after her husband's death and her theatrics beside Felipe's coffin had pious, ritualistic, and political goals; see Aram, *Juana the Mad,* 83–110. See also Fernández Álvarez, *Juana la Loca;* and Zalama Rodríguez, *Vida cotidiana*.

47. *CD,* I:415. This appears in Pulgar's chronicle of their reign. See Pulgar, *Crónica,* chap. 1, 2.

48. *CD,* I:417–18. Referring to Isabel the Catholic's brother, Alfonso, as "king" was a political statement in support of the dynasty. Until his death Alfonso had been the figurehead for the rebellion of Enrique's magnates, who, as stated in the previous chapter, claimed the king's daughter Juana la Beltraneja was illegitimate. In 1465, they crowned Alfonso king in defiance of Enrique. It was Alfonso's early death that led them to proclaim Isabel as heir.

João of Portugal, allotting her 200,000 gold *doblas* as a dowry.[49] Catalina and João's marriage act was signed in Burgos on 5 July 1524, and took effect a year later. Their matrimony was part of a double engagement in which Carlos V was betrothed to João's sister, Isabel. Both Crowns agreed to support the other, and to cooperate in the mutual defense of their North African territories against Muslim "pirates."[50] For Catalina, the engagement and marriage signaled not only the end of her confinement at Tordesillas, but also her departure from the Kingdom of Castile. As was typical in these sorts of royal marriages, the queen never returned to her homeland. And as a consequence Catalina never laid eyes on her mother again. But that does not mean that she forgot her, or the many years she had spent at her side. Once in Portugal she dispatched trusted clergymen to Tordesillas to inquire about Juana, and requested from her brother Carlos favors for those who had served Juana loyally there.[51] The author of the *Carro* sensed Catalina's affection and concern for her mother, and took pains to portray the dowager in a favorable light.

Interestingly enough, when Catalina moved to Portugal in 1524 one of the things that she took with her from the Palace of Tordesillas was a copy of the Castilian *Libro de las donas.* This would have been her mother's edition, the one commissioned and passed down to her by Isabel the Catholic.[52] Catalina must have taken the book with her because she was interested in it; thus, she would have been aware of the various changes that the author of the *Carro* introduced in his version two decades later. However, reading would probably not have been foremost in the young queen's mind when she settled in Portugal in 1525. She was eighteen years old, and her husband was twenty-three; their priority, and her duty, was to ensure the continuation of the dynasty by providing an heir. This proved to be a daunting task, and fortunately, she was, like her mother, a very strong lady, although not as fortunate in her child rearing.

Impressively, Juana had given birth to six children who would reach adulthood and be successfully married off. Leonor, her eldest, first became queen of Portugal (r. 1518–21), and then of France (r. 1530–47). Carlos, her heir,

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49. Fonseca Benevides, *Rainhas de Portugal,* 2:4; Buescu, *Catarina de Austria,* 134; and Buescu, *D. João III,* 152–60.

50. Marçal Lourenço, "O séquito e a casa," 176–77.

51. For instance on 17 March 1529 Catalina asked Empress Isabel to appoint Diego Azpecia to her court. Azpecia had served her and her mother in Tordesillas. Viaud, *Lettres des souverains portugais,* 125 (doc. 40).

52. Sánchez-Molero, "Portugal y Castilla," 1661; and Sánchez-Molero, *Regia Bibliotheca,* 1:8–82. Catalina was authorized by Carlos V to take the books from her mother's library with her to Portugal. Jordan, *A rainha coleccionadora,* 29.

inherited both the Holy Roman Empire and the Spanish kingdoms. Isabel married Christian II of Denmark, becoming queen of Denmark and Norway (1515–23), as well as Sweden (1520–21). Fernando became king of Bohemia, Croatia, and Hungary (from 1526), and succeeded his brother Carlos as Holy Roman Emperor (1531–64), and Maria had preceded Fernando in Hungary and Bohemia as queen (1515–26), and later served him as regent and governor. Catalina, the second of Juana's daughters to marry a Portuguese king, was the youngest.

Catalina, in turn, gave birth to nine children: Afonso, Maria Manuela, Isabel, Beatriz, Manuel, Felipe, Denis, João, and António. But except for Maria Manuela (1527–45), who married the *infante* Felipe, and João (1537–54), who wedded Juana of Habsburg, all the others died in their early childhood. These continuous deaths took a heavy toll on the royal couple, both emotionally and in terms of their confidence regarding the future of their family line. António, the last child that Catalina conceived, was born on 9 March 1539 and died ten months later, on 20 January 1540—the same year that our anonymous friar was completing the *Carro de las donas.* The author was close to the royal couple and was well aware of Catalina's losses and her desperation, and it was as a consequence of this, in response to the cumulative deaths of so many of her children, that he added a fifth book to the *Llibre de les dones.* In other words, just as Eiximenis had tailored the first version of the *Llibre* to what he perceived as the needs of Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós, this latest author reconfigured the book for the specific benefit of Catalina and her contemporaries. Hence, book 4 of the *Llibre,* which was originally intended as a manual for women taking up the vocational life, was now broadened into an essay on the virtues and the Ten Commandments. In response to current trends in popular piety, it was altered to accommodate a male audience, and was purged of the sections referring to the taking of monastic vows.[53] Further, a fifth book was added that dealt expressly with death and mourning (providing instruction of sorts similar to the *ars moriendi,* or "art of dying"), which was precisely what Catalina and her husband needed, given the succession of children who predeceased them. Indeed, they even saw João's illegitimate children die: the younger, Manuel, died as a child, while the elder, Duarte, who had been appointed archbishop of Braga, passed away in 1543. On the latter's death a month long period of mourning was observed in the royal court.[54]

53. Book 4 of the *Llibre* was the one most heavily modified, particularly chapters 277 to 280—the ones that discussed the monastic vows of poverty, chastity, and obedience. See Viera, "Un estudio textual," 167; Clausell, *CD,* I:27–28.

54. Fonseca Benevides, *Rainhas de Portugal,* 21. See note 56 in this chapter.

Book 5 comprises, in effect, a new treatise by the anonymous friar on "the sickness of death"—one that comes complete with its own dedicatory prologue, and could function as an independent work.[55] In terms of content, however, the book is not so original—his basic advice to the faithful regarding death is to accept God's will and prepare well for the inevitable moment.[56] One should be honest and do good works, cultivate virtue and good behavior, and be sure to receive the sacrament of extreme unction, if possible. To communicate all of this he deploys the metaphor of a knight (the soul) going off to battle (death), mounted on his horse (the body), and carrying his weapons (his faith and his good works). These include the shield of charity he bears in his left hand, and the sword of justice in his right. His helmet represents his memory, his willpower, his capacity to reason, and the five senses. On his legs he carries prudence, and in his feet penance and good service to God. The harness protects the heart and the stomach, which are tempted by the devil.[57]

The military metaphor is expanded as the treatise goes on to describe the moral mission of the church. The friar imagines Jesus Christ at the head of a great Christian army, arranged by battalion and rank. The first of these battalions consists of the secular clergy led by the pope, and followed by the cardinals, the patriarchs, and the archbishops, bishops, and prelates. Next in formation are the secular rulers, headed by the worldly emperors, kings, and important lords. The fourth battalion consists of the Holy Innocents, martyrs, and pious virgins, and the fifth is made up of solitary contemplative folk, hermits, and recluses. Arrayed behind them is the regular church, including the monastic, mendicant, and military orders, and finally, bringing up the rear, is a battalion of laypeople, such as righteous knights, citizens, merchants, and peasants, who had chosen the sacrament of marriage over chastity.[58] It is an allegorical vision that reflects the church's ideal of the social hierarchy, for it is the pope and his clergy who serve as Christ's vanguard; Catalina—well prepared to do battle with Death, having read the *Carro de las donas*—belonged in the second division, along with the worldly kings and princes. Like Eiximenis, the author explicitly recognized the station of

55. *CD,* II:475.

56. Texts intended to help people cope with death were common in the late Middle Ages. For instance, Jean Gerson wrote *De scientia mortis* (*On the Knowledge of Death;* c. 1403) as an aid to those attending the dying. The text of the *Ars moriendi* (*Art of Dying*) circulated widely in Europe in Latin and in vernacular languages. For instance, an abbreviated version was published in Castilian in Zaragoza c. 1483 as *Arte del bien morir.* Sanmartín Bastida, *El arte de morir.* Indeed, an *Ars moriendi* is attributed to Eiximenis. See chapter 1 above.

57. *CD,* II:493–98.

58. *CD,* II:498–506.

his queenly patroness, but situated himself slightly higher on the ladder of authority, thereby presenting his work as instruction, rather than merely recommendation. Moreover, his choice of allegory resonated with sensibilities of the times. It was precisely as he was finishing the manuscript of the *Carro* that a Spanish ex-soldier-turned-priest named Ignatius of Loyola was drafting the organization of a new clerical order, the Company (later, the Society) of Jesus—an order modeled on the regimentation of the Spanish imperial army. The Jesuits would be the Tercios of Christ.

As it was, Catalina would certainly have needed book 5 of the *Carro* in the years to follow. In 1544, when she and João received the news that their daughter Maria Manuela had died at only seventeen, the royal couple was left inconsolable. Lope Hurtado de Mendoza described the situation to Emperor Carlos V as follows: "They have been deeply affected, as is rightly so, by the death of the Princess, and the King and the Queen have been driven to great extremes."[59] Their grief and desperation would be compounded nine years later with the death of João, the last of their surviving children. This heralded a crisis on a dynastic as well as a personal level, alleviated only by the birth of a posthumous son to the deceased João eighteen days later. At that point, and after bearing nine children, the king and queen's only living descendants were two grandsons: Carlos, the heir to the throne of Spain, and the newborn Sebastião, heir to the throne of Portugal. Not long after the birth, Sebastião's mother, Juana de Austria, was called away to Spain to serve as regent on behalf of her father, Carlos V, who was occupied ruling his other territories. Catalina and João were thereby charged with the upbringing of Sebastião, but the king was hardly up to the task. In 1555, the Spanish ambassador, Sánchez de Córdoba, reported to Carlos V that the king was in the grips of an illness "in which he had relapsed many times, and was always discomfited and gripped by melancholy."[60] The king would not last long; on 11 June 1557 João III died, with Catalina praying by his side until the end.[61] On the death of her husband Catalina became regent of Portugal, and would serve in this capacity, aided by her brother-in-law, Cardinal Henrique, until 1568, when Sebastião reached the age of twenty and became king in his own right.[62]

If Catalina weathered her repeated bereavements better than her husband had, it was perhaps thanks to her reading of the *Carro,* which she apparently

59. Mendes Drumond Braga, *Um espaço,* 70.

60. Cited by Buescu, *Catarina de Austria,* 316; and Drumond Braga, *João III,* 106.

61. Jordan, *A rainha coleccionadora,* 60.

62. See a copy of João III's dispositions regarding Catalina's regency at BA: 51-IX-32, ff. 87v–88v (1557). See also BA: 51-IX-32, ff. 71–74v (Lisbon, 14–15 June 1558); BA: 51-IX-32, ff. 90v–91v (15 June 1557).

took to heart. In a letter probably written in 1577, a year before the queen's own death, in which she was trying to console Catarina, Duchess of Bragança, over the loss of her sister, she asked her niece to remember that the departed Maria was "resting in heaven." She assured her that if Maria had died, this was God's will, and "it is not permissible, nor is it possible to resist such things, there being no other remedy but to console ourselves that this has occurred for the good of God, and to remain obedient to that which he wishes to do as regards our affairs, as we ought to be with what he wishes to do with us."[63]

In a further parallel to the first queenly patron of Francesc Eiximenis, Catalina's dynasty, like that of Maria de Luna, would die off; but mercifully for Catalina, and again like Maria, she would not live to see its failure. Catalina and João's eldest grandson, Carlos, was apparently mentally unstable. After launching an unsuccessful rebellion against his father, Felipe II, he was sent to prison, where he died in 1568 without issue—an episode that, twisted into a tale of fatherly cruelty and violence, came to constitute a pillar of the anti-Spanish Black Legend.[64] As for Sebastião, defying common sense and the advice of his grandmother, who was at that point too old to impose her will on the young king, he embarked on a Crusade to North Africa in 1578, where he died, unmarried, and childless, riding into defeat. His death marked the end of the Avis dynasty and of Catalina's offspring, although the influence of Eiximenis and the *Carro* lived on.

Language and Devotion at the Portuguese Court

A good part of the credit for the ongoing influence of the *Carro* in the world of the Habsburgs was that, despite being composed in a Portuguese court for a queen of Portugal and her entourage, the book was written in Spanish. Nor is this an isolated case; rather, it reflects the general trends that characterized the cultural and religious exchange between the two kingdoms in this period.[65] Part of the reason that authors were attracted to Castilian may have been the breadth and success of Spanish political expansion in this era, which helped

63. Fonseca Benevides, *Rainhas de Portugal,* 18 (Xobregas, 20 October 1577).

64. See Hillgarth, *The Mirror of Spain,* 520–27. A tremendous amount of scholarly work has been done on the Black Legend; see Juderías, *La leyenda negra;* Kamen and Pérez, "La visión de España"; and García Cárcel, *La leyenda negra.*

65. For instance, Joao III wrote to his sister, Empress Isabel, in his own hand to request her help to accelerate the reform of the Franciscan Observants in Portugal by pressuring Friar Mathias, the Franciscan general in Spain, to send someone to reform the Portuguese convents; Viaud, *Lettres des souverains,* 181–82, doc. 90 (Setúbal, 5 April 1532). In 1532 Portugal was divided into two Observant Franciscan provinces; Viaud, *Lettres des souverains,* 202, doc. 107 (Lisbon, 14 September 1532).

establish the language as a sort of lingua franca through much of the European West.[66] However, at bottom, the reason that Spanish became, alongside Portuguese and Latin, a preferred language in the early modern Lusitanian court was because of peninsular politics. As Ana Isabel Buescu observes, "In the sixteenth century the Portuguese court was bilingual, as a consequence of the successive marriage alliances of the Portuguese kings with Spanish princesses, who with their households and retainers brought with them fashions, mores, manners, and tastes, as well as their language, the use of which came to be imposed in an indisputable manner on the Portuguese court."[67]

Thus, even though Portuguese was developing as a literary language abroad thanks to the expansion of the Portuguese empire and the use of Portuguese in the missionary movement, for writers working in the courtly environment at home, Spanish remained the language of choice.[68] It was simple: a book written in Spanish could find an audience among the royals, nobles, courtiers, and clergy who moved back and forth between the two kingdoms, whereas a book written in Portuguese would not. This trend would have broad implications for the development of Portuguese culture; as Thomas Glick has observed, "Linguistic change as a model for cultural change in general is wholly appropriate," given that "the contact of two different languages provides a microcosm of the contact of cultures."[69]

Just as influential in this process were Spanish writers who settled in Portugal but who continued to write in their native language. For example, the fact that he was writing in Portugal for a Portuguese king did not deter João III's chaplain, Francisco de Monzón (or Monçón), from writing works for the royal couple in Castilian. For Monzón, the idea of writing in Portuguese was out of the question—for him Latin and Spanish were the only worthy literary languages, and he chose the latter for the simple reason that in this way "everybody could read it."[70] Hence, the "mirror" he composed for the young prince João, and that he dedicated to the king, would be published in Castilian as the *Libro primero del espejo del príncipe cristiano* (*First Book of the Mirror of the Christian Prince;* 1544).[71] Likewise, his mirror for Maria Manuela, and dedicated to her mother, was also in Spanish.

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66. See Marcos de Dios, "Castilian and Portuguese," 418.

67. Buescu, *D. João III,* 249.

68. Mendes de Almeida, "A língua," 901–5; Faria Paulino, *A galáxia das línguas.*

69. Glick, *Islamic and Christian Spain,* 277.

70. See Vázquez Cuesta, *A língua e a cultura;* Buescu, "Aspectos do bilinguismo," 15; Buescu, "*Y la Hespañola,*" 49–66; and Buescu, *D. João III,* 248–49.

71. Monzón also dedicated his *Norte de Confessores* (1546) to João III. In fact, the second edition of the *Libro primero del espejo del príncipe cristiano* (Lisbon, 1571) was dedicated to the future king, Sebastião, after João III had died in 1557. It was a longer version than the first one, expanding on

The predominance of Spanish is understandable, given that at this time Spain was experiencing a "Golden Age" of literature epitomized by literary giants including Teresa de Ávila, Miguel de Cervantes, Luis de Góngora, Francisco de Quevedo, Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina, and Calderón de la Barca. But Spanish was not only a literary language; it also became the dominant language of technical and scientific writing, as well as of the royal administration and diplomacy—indeed, in Castile it had dominated the administration since the 1250s.[72] For instance, when Carlos V wrote to João III to give him his condolences after the death of his son João, he did it in Spanish.[73] This was not a discourtesy, but a tacit recognition that Castilian was one of the established languages of the Portuguese court. This situation was due in no small degree to the efforts of Catalina of Habsburg, who actively promoted the language. For example, in 1541 and 1542 she bought no fewer than eight of Nebrija's Spanish grammars so as to perfect her daughter's and her ladies-in-waiting's facility with the language.[74] After all, the Spanish royal court was her marital destination.

As in the case of the literary influence of Spanish, not all Portuguese were pleased about the infiltration of Castilian as a language of court. Certainly, it was both a cause and a consequence of the inwardly spiraling ideological proximity of the two Crowns. This began in the late Middle Ages, and can be seen, for example, in how Portugal's policies vis-à-vis religious minorities were related to those of Castile. The Catholic Kings established the Inquisition in 1478, and published the Edict of Expulsion of the Jews in 1492; Isabel expelled the Muslims from the city of Granada in 1499, and ordered the conversion of all of her Muslim subjects in 1502.[75] In Portugal, Manuel I apparently expelled his Muslim subjects in 1496 in anticipation of the

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the fifty-nine original chapters to a total of ninety-one. Correia Fernandes, "Francisco de Monzón," 44, 49, and 56.

72. Nevertheless, as Buescu notes, in the sixteenth century only 13.7 percent of the total works published in Portugal were in Spanish, as compared to 30.3 percent in Latin and 56 percent in Portuguese; Buescu, "*Y la Hespañola,*" 55. See also Wilkinson, who notes the success of Spanish in the Portuguese printing industry; Wilkinson, "Exploring the Print World," 498; see also Burke, *Languages and Communities,* 63.

73. *As gavetas da Torre do Tombo,* vol. 1: (GAV. 1–2), entrada 468, 783 (Brussels, 4 March 1554), 769, doc. 468, II, 6–5 (paper). For instance, we can find glimpses of the use of Spanish in the correspondence of Mary Tudor, queen of England (1553–58), granddaughter of the Catholic Kings, who in 1556 sent a letter to her aunt Catalina. See Fonseca Benevides, *Rainhas de Portugal,* 2:40–41 (letter dated in London, 10 May 1556).

74. Catalina also contributed to this process by having Spaniards in her service, but reserved the most important position at the court, that of *mayordomo* (*mordomo-mor*), for a Portuguese nobleman. See Marçal Lourenço, "O séquito e a casa," 179; and Labrador Arroyo, "La casa de la reina Catalina," 204–5. Regarding Nebrija, see Buescu, *Catarina de Austria,* 268.

75. For the expulsion of the Muslims, see Catlos, *The Muslims of Latin Christendom,* 214–27.

Castilian edict, whereas his Jews were ordered to convert in 1497, soon after those of Spain. The Inquisition may not have been established in Portugal until 1536 under João III, but this delay was due to the agreement his predecessor had made with the Jewish communities, rather than any reluctance to implement it.[76]

Most worrying to some members of the Portuguese aristocracy, however, was the prospect of the marital arrangement between Catalina's daughter, Maria Manuela, and the future Felipe II. This would set the stage for a dynastic unification with Spain that they feared would see Portugal subsumed into its more powerful neighbor and disenfranchise the native nobility.[77] These fears proved well founded, for such a union did indeed come about in 1580, two years after King Sebastião's death. It was then that Felipe II initiated what became known as the "dual monarchy," an eighty-year experiment that ended abruptly with the revolts of 1640 against Felipe IV. During this time the Portuguese experienced problems similar to those of the Catalano-Aragonese in the era of the Catholic Kings: they lost their royal court and everything that was associated with it, including the active patronage of their native culture, language, and courtiers. In spite of the fact that even then the royal court remained itinerant, and Portuguese were welcome to join it, the linguistic and cultural domination of Spanish and Castile was uncontestable. This was a process that was already well under way in the early sixteenth century, and it was why an Observant Franciscan from the convent of Valladolid residing at the Portuguese court and in the service of a queen of Portugal would chose to render his work in Castilian. But if the language of the *Carro* was the same as that of the *Libro de las donas,* the times were not; and, therefore, the author was forced to seek out fresh examples of women to exemplify the moral and devotional program he and Eiximenis were advocating.

Isabel the Catholic: A New Model Queen

When Francesc Eiximenis composed the *Scala Dei* for Maria de Luna he provided a number of model queens and exemplary women for her to emulate. It was his goal to cultivate Maria as a pious queen, a faithful protector of the Franciscan order, and—when necessary—a guide for her husband.

76. In the Crown of Aragon, by contrast, the Muslims were not ordered to convert to Christianity until 1525. For Portuguese policy, see Oliveira e Costa, *D. Manuel I,* 83–86; and Soyer, *The Persecution of the Jews.*

77. In order to counter this outcome, the Count of Vimioso, the Marquis of Vila Real, and the *infant* Don Luis tried unsuccessfully to find other matches for Maria Manuela. Buescu, *Catarina de Austria,* 266.

For Eiximenis's purposes, Sanxa of Mallorca, queen of Naples, made such a suitable example that she was reprised in the *Libro de las donas,* although given her gender-bending and her propensity to override the authority of her husband, she represented the limits of acceptable feminine comportment.[78] By 1540, however, Sanxa had become rather obscure as a historical-literary figure, and had no connection to the ruling dynasties of Spain and Portugal. Thus, although the types of characteristics she embodied were also valued by the author of the *Carro,* she was relegated to a much more minor role.[79] Instead, the friar sought to evoke examples that would be closer to his patroness and his readers, and so he settled on the figure of Isabel the Catholic, her daughters, and two other late medieval Castilian pious widows.[80] Given her extraordinary political career, the friar could not ignore Isabel's accomplishment as a ruler, and was forced to at least acknowledge her role in this regard: "The king, seeing the great ability that the queen had in governance, subjected all serious matters to the good judgment and knowledge of the queen."[81] That said, his Isabel the Catholic is not quite the Isabel of today's historians and literary scholars—a queen in her own right, ruling alongside her husband, and constructing her own regal image thought literature and art. He emphasizes her piety, modesty, and virtue, and turns her from a queen into a woman.

Nevertheless, his Isabel is a character that reflects the archetypal character that had emerged from the literature written both during her lifetime and afterward.[82] In little over a generation from the time of their deaths, the Catholic Kings had become a symbol for those of Golden Age Spain who harked back nostalgically to a more traditional, less complex, and less imperial Middle Ages. This was particularly true of Isabel, who was canonized in the courtly imagination. For example, within only four years of Isabel's death, Baldassare Castiglione would say of her in *Il cortegiano,* "There has not been in our time on earth a brighter example of true goodness, of liberality—in short, of every virtue—than Queen Isabella; and although the fame of that illustrious lady is very great in every place and among every nation, those who lived in her company and were witness to her actions, do all affirm that

78. See chapter 3 above.

79. Costanza/Sanxa does in fact appear in the *Carro,* and is praised, as in the *Llibre de les dones,* for endeavoring to maintain the moral order at court.

80. Isabel the Catholic appears in book 2, which discusses married women. See chapters LXII to LXV [I], *CD,* I:414–26.

81. *CD,* I:422.

82. Marino, "Inventing the Catholic Queen."

this fame sprang from her virtue and merits."[83] This is also the image associated with the Catholic queen in the many works of theater in which she and Fernando appear as characters—works by authors such as Lope de Vega, Tirso de Molina, and Luis Vélez de Guevara.[84] But this is not quite the queen that is portrayed in the *Carro.* Rather, the friar draws on the image of Isabel presented by her "official chronicler," Hernando del Pulgar, in his *Crónica de los Reyes Católicos* (c. 1482–92, printed in 1565), but picks only those aspects that suit his argument, and gives them a Franciscan twist.[85] Most strikingly, the friar does not want Isabel to be remembered as a ruling queen or as a figure of political authority, but rather as a model of piety—a wealthy woman who devoted her resources and energy to the promotion of the church and, particularly, the Observant Franciscans. Hence, he emphasizes Isabel's many pious donations and her active role as a founder of monastic houses. She is described as a "most Christian queen" (*cristianísima*), just as Catalina is referred to on the frontispiece of the *Carro de las donas.*

For him, Isabel was so full of "perfections" that they were already manifest in her early childhood, when she was living in Arévalo, far from the royal court. His description of her when she was taken to Ávila—the first step on her path to queenship—holds her up as an example to all women, "although women naturally desire to be complimented and praised, this Catholic princess never desired to consent for the grandees [of the kingdom] to raise her as queen; before them she launched into a wonderful discourse regarding the obedience one ought to hold towards one's elder relatives."[86] This is quite a remarkable account, considering that in reality Isabel rose up in arms against her half brother, Enrique IV, overthrew the claim to the crown of her niece, Juana, and secretly broke the treaty she had made with Enrique by eloping with Fernando. For the friar, however, her ascent to the throne represented a struggle by Isabel against her own feminine nature, one that she finally lost when she accepted that it was her destiny to become queen. At this moment, he says, she turned to God for guidance with her characteristic modesty, and

83. Castiglione, *The Book of the Courtier,* 203. Castiglione started writing *The Book of the Courtier* around 1508, but it was first printed twenty years later.

84. For instance, Isabel appears as a character in the following plays: Lope de Vega's "El mejor mozo de España" and "El niño inocente de la Guardia," Tirso de Molina's "Antona García," "El amor médico," and "Doña Beatriz de Silva," and Vélez de Guevara's "La luna de la sierra," "La serrana de la Vera," and "La corte del demonio." See Caba's study of these plays, *Isabel la Católica;* and also D. Ostlund, *The Re-creation of History;* see also Martín, *Isabel la Católica.*

85. *CD,* I:415. The actual title of Pulgar's chronicle was *Crónica de los muy altos e poderosos Don Fernando e Doña Isabel, rey é reyna de Castilla, de León, etc.*

86. *CD,* I:417.

sought the prayers and counsel of the Franciscans—the religious order for which she felt the closest affinity.[87]

Her marriage to Fernando was presented in similar terms. To marry was a matter of duty, and when she was ready to acquiesce, she turned once more to God for advice. In emulation of the exercises of the Old Testament queen Esther, who, before she asked her husband, King Ahasuerus, to spare the Jews of Persia from massacre, fasted and prayed for three days, Isabel is said to have cried, fasted, and prayed as she was considering her marriage to Fernando. And once again she turned to the clergy, and particularly the Franciscans, dispatching letters to both friars and Clarissans, seeking their advice regarding what was held to be the most important decision in her life. It was not a resolution she was taking for herself, but rather to serve "the greater good and utility of these kingdoms of Castile and León."[88] In other words, his Isabel is a woman who sublimates her own desires to a higher purpose, and who will not act without first seeking advice from men and from the clergy, and especially from Franciscans.

But for all that she was held up as a model, the author of the *Carro* does not go into great detail regarding her life or her reign; his intent is merely to underline how she governed herself, her household, and her kingdoms according to the Franciscan feminine ideal. Hence, he describes her life as wife and mother, and head of her queenly court, in unequivocal but rather vague terms: "Her house was all perfection and sanctity."[89] Instead the author of the *Carro* emphasizes the patronage and protection she provided for his order, and her unceasing generosity as the founder of monastic houses, most of which were convents for Observant Franciscans. These he catalogs in great detail, emphasizing the wealth of their endowments and the majesty of their buildings and facilities: San Juan de los Reyes in Toledo, San Pedro de Montoro in Rome, Santa Engracia in Zaragoza, the monastery of the Order of Santiago, San Francisco, Santo Domingo, and Nuestra Señora de la Victoria in Málaga, Santo Tomás in Ávila, and Santa Cruz and San Antonio in Segovia. The Kingdom of Granada, which the queen established in 1492, was the particular object of her patronage; here she endowed the convent of Santa Isabel la Real, San Luis, Santa Cruz, San Jerónimo, and the Cathedral's Capella Mayor, along with many more Franciscan foundations both in the capital and throughout the kingdom—so many, the author claims, that it is impossible to name them all.[90]

87. *CD,* I:418.

88. *CD,* I:419.

89. *CD,* I:419.

90. *CD,* I:419–20. For an analysis of the connection between Observant Franciscans, Clares, and Queen Isabel and her ladies, see Graña Cid, "De terciarias a clarisas." Regarding the foundations at the time of the Catholic Kings, see Atienza Gómez, *Tiempos de conventos,* 97–122. Isabel and Fernando

Although other aspects of her devotional character are also celebrated, including her almsgiving, particularly to needy widows, it is clear that the friar considers this to be of secondary importance to her generosity as a donor to monasteries.[91] This is even more evident when it comes to the author's treatment of the queen's policies regarding religious minorities. Whereas Ferdinand was rather more indifferent to the matter of his non-Christian subjects, Isabel pushed for the Catholicization of their realms. It was probably both who were behind the ultimatum of conversion or exile handed down to the Jews of Castile and Aragon in 1492, but it was in her lands of Castile (rather than those of the Crown of Aragon) that the Muslims were ordered by fiat to convert to Christianity in 1502. This was a revolutionary policy that provoked tremendous upheaval in her lands, and yet for the author of the *Carro* it merits only the briefest of mentions: "This most Christian queen rid Castile, and Aragon, and all of her kingdoms and principalities of heretics, and expelled the Jews and Muslims from her kingdoms."[92] His circumspection here may also have had a political dimension. Hernando del Pulgar's description of Isabel's policy explains the "heresy" that the queen stamped out as being the Judaizing activities of *conversos,* but this was a subject that the author of the *Carro* probably did not want to broach, given the controversy during his own time regarding the Inquisition and the Portuguese *conversos.*[93]

Two other instances where the friar's account diverges from that of del Pulgar provide glimpses of the author's intentionality, and also his ideological position regarding the role of women in society. Whereas Hernando del Pulgar recounted in passing how much Queen Isabel enjoyed the conversation and company of religious people and how sometimes they counseled her, the author of the *Carro* went to pains to emphasize her special relationship with her Franciscan confessors.[94] Then, to this, he added the following embellishment:

> She always had for the most part a confessor from the Observant movement of the Order of Saint Francis. She always chose a man of letters and of virtuous life, among whom figured the most reverend lord, the Archbishop of Toledo, Cardenal of Spain, Friar Francisco Ximénez. It

are also praised in Franciscan chronicles. See Torres, *Crónica de la provincia franciscana,* 1:102. See also Silleras-Fernandez, "Exceso femenino."

91. For her almsgiving, see *CD,* I:421.

92. *CD,* I:422.

93. Pulgar has the following: "This queen was who stamped out and got rid of the heresy that there was in the Kingdoms of Castile and Aragon, *of some Christians descended from Jews who became judaizers,* and made them live as good Christians." Pulgar, *Crónica,* 37. Cited by Clausell, *CD,* I:422 n. 464; italics indicate words that were omitted from the *Carro.*

94. *CD,* I:422.

> seemed like the hand of God was with her, because she was fortunate in all she undertook. And this was permitted by God because before she undertook her affairs she commended them to God with much prayer, fasting, and almsgiving, and wrote to holy people who also commended them to God.[95]

Because he felt compelled to push Catalina toward Franciscanism, he emphasized Isabel's predilection for Observant Franciscan confessors, and name-dropped Cisneros as the best example.[96] This was no small matter; royal confessors guarded the conscience of the monarchs, were privy to their greatest secrets and their deepest concerns. This, together with their authority to instruct and chastise rulers, endowed them with considerable power.

Thus, what the author wanted to emphasize to his patroness, Catalina, and any others who might read this work, was that Isabel the Catholic was first and foremost a devout woman and a patroness and protector of the Franciscans, and it was this that was the source of her privilege before God and the success of her reign. To this end, he concludes his narrative with a review of the queen's last will and testament, which confirms her commitment to the Franciscan order. In the fragments of the document that he cites, she invoked Saint Francis as "Seraphic Confessor, Patriarch of the Poor, and Wondrous Knight in the Service of Our Lord Jesus Christ."[97] Nor is this an exaggeration, given that it was Isabel's declared wish to be buried wearing the habit of the order in a humble grave in the monastery of Saint Francis of the Alhambra in Granada.[98]

This was all part of a well-established strategy employed by Franciscan authors for the promotion of their own order. Eiximenis had used the same approach with Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós and Maria de Luna, and other Franciscans before him had used it too. A full century earlier, for example, Durand de Champagne composed the *Speculum dominarum* (*Mirror for Lady-Seigneurs*), later translated to French as *Miroir des femmes,* for Queen Jeanne de Navarre (1285–1305), the wife of Philip the Fair (1285–1314). Durand was her confessor, and, as Rina Lahav argues, his aim in composing this work was to build Franciscan influence at the French court by presenting the order to the queen as a tool of pious governance in the face of competition from

95. *CD,* I:422.
96. *CD,* I:422.
97. Cited by Fernández-Alvarez, *Isabel la Católica,* 434–35.
98. Cabañas González, López, and Quijano, *Isabel la Católica,* 243–57.

Dominicans and amid the first period of the order's decadence.[99] Although the author of the *Carro* could not have foreseen it in 1540, the Franciscans would soon face a similar challenge, as the popularity of the new Jesuit order grew in noble and royal circles—a challenge the *Carro* would help to counter with its unremittingly pro-Franciscan stance.

Like Mother, Like Daughters

After considering the good example of Isabel the Catholic, the final three chapters of book 2 of the *Carro de las donas* turn to her four daughters, Catalina's aunts and her mother. Two of Isabel's daughters, Isabel and Maria, both of whom reigned as queens of Portugal, each have a chapter dedicated to them. Catalina's mother, Juana, together with her aunt Catalina, who reigned in England as "Catherine of Aragon," share a single chapter—and a rather short one, given the unfortunate nature of their experiences.[100] Juana, of course, spent most of her adult life incarcerated, while Catherine's husband, Henry VIII, was so determined to divorce her that he was prepared to defy the pope and establish a separate Church of England as a consequence. Such misfortunes notwithstanding, the author was compelled to praise them each in some measure, given that they were so closely related to his patroness and to the even more powerful emperor Carlos V.

Isabel (1470–98) was the Catholic Kings' oldest child. She married twice, first to the heir apparent of Portugal, and subsequently to his cousin, the new king. Her parents were determined to put to an end to the conflict with their neighboring kingdom by joining their families in marriage. Hence, in 1490, the young princess was wed to the *infant* Afonso, the eldest grandson and heir of the same Afonso V who had claimed the throne of Castile himself by virtue of his marriage to Juana la Beltraneja, and had launched a failed invasion of Isabel and Fernando's kingdom. However, it was not to be; in July 1491 the seventeen-year-old prince fell from a horse. As he lay on his

99. Lahav, "A Mirror of Queenship."

100. Isabel de Aragon, queen of Portugal, appears in Chapter LXV[I]: "Regarding the many perfections that Our Lord God gave to the Queen of Portugal, and Princess of Castile, Lady Isabel"; *CD,* I:426–29. María, queen of Portugal, is studied in chapter LXVI[I]: "Regarding the most Christian and holy Queen of Portugal, Lady María, wife of the King, *Don* Manuel. Regarding the many works that our Lord did for this holy queen, so she might serve as an example to ladies who are married presently, and those who will be, until the end of the world"; *CD,* I:429–34. Both Juana the Mad and Catherine de Aragon are the subject of chapter LXVII[I]: "Regarding the lady-queen, Lady Juana, our lady and regarding the Queen of England"; *CD,* I:434–36. The title the author chose for Juana and Catherine's chapter shows that he did not consider them as embodying the same moral fiber as their sisters; they are not presented merely as *Christianísimas* (most Christian).

deathbed Isabel, raving in anguish, refused to leave his side. Contemporary historical sources portrayed Isabel as afflicted by a most profound grief after her husband's passing.[101] While it may be true that a display of deep sadness was expected from a recent widow, Isabel's seemed to verge on the psychotic.[102] The *Carro de las donas* described her mourning in the most graphic terms, recounting how she chopped off her own hair in despair and how she suffered:

> Who can say how many tears she shed! She never undressed; for forty days she did not eat more than a bite of bread, and by force, the king, her father-in-law, and the queen, her mother-in-law, who were by her side through this, personally fed her. . . . She never lay down in bed for more than three months; never did she change her clothes, but dressed in mourning, a shawl drawn over her head, so that no one could see her face, and due to this mistreatment her health suffered great detriment.[103]

According to the *Carro,* João II and his queen, Leonor de Viseu, became very worried about Isabel's health and did their best to comfort her, going so far as to place her bed in their own quarters, and forcing her to agree to eat at least some broth. Isabel's parents also sent help, and three months after her bereavement summoned her back to Castile.

The friar, of course, was not there to witness Isabel's suffering, but he had abundant material to draw on, given that many contemporaries commented on it. In fact, the account in the *Carro de las donas* is most likely based on earlier works, such as Rui de Pina's *Crónica de D. João II* (*Chronicle of João II*) and García de Resende's *Vida e feitos del rei D. João II* (*Life and Deeds of King João II*), both of which record not only the princess's profound pain, but that of her in-laws, who had lost their only son and heir.[104] Isabel's distress was also noted by the humanist Pedro Mártir d'Anghiera (or Anglería)—who later served as Isabel the Catholic's chaplain—in his *Opus epistolarum* (*Epistolary Collection;* Alcala, 1530), while no less than three other authors attached to the Catholic Kings' court composed works aimed at consoling her. These include the Franciscan Antonio de Montesinos, who wrote *Romance hecho por mandado de la reina princesa a la muerte del príncipe de Portugal, su marido*

101. Resende, *Crónica de D. João II,* 204–5.

102. See Callahan, "The Widow's Tears."

103. *CD,* I:427.

104. Viera, "El llanto de la infanta Isabel," 406–7; Sanz Hermida, "A vos Diana." See also Nogales Rincón, "Las lágrimas de la infanta"; and Nogales Rincón, "En torno a los matrimonios." I would like to thank Dr. Nogales for allowing me to read the manuscript versions of his articles.

(*A Romance Written at the Command of the Princess-Queen on the Death of the Prince of Portugal, Her Husband*), Isabel the Catholic's chaplain, Alonso Ortiz, who composed a *Tratado consolatorio a la princesa de Portugal* (*Treatise to Console the Princess of Portugal;* 1493), and Andrés de Li, who dedicated his *Summa de pasciencia* (*Treatise on Patience*) to the princess.[105]

In the literature of the time the widowed Isabel is portrayed as a tragic figure, suffering from the sorrows of love, not unlike the male lovers in the sentimental novels that were so fashionable at that time, however, with a clearly moralistic tone in her case. Ortiz lamented for her "wounded heart" (*coraçón llagado*), which caused her so much pain that she "greatly embraced sadness and tears" (*abraçava más las tristezas y lloros*).[106] Li, for his part, implored her to endure her suffering with forbearance, and his advice was evidently appreciated, given that Isabel the Catholic kept two copies of his *Treatise.* As for the many lurid details that the author of the *Carro* adds, members of the court who remembered the events may have recounted these to him, or he may have simply read about them in the chronicles or invented them. Whatever the case, his take on Isabel's mourning was essentially the same as his predecessors': Isabel was devastated by her husband's death, she found consolation in reading devotional books, and survived by "feeding herself tears, night and day" (*su manjar hera lágrimas de día y de noche*).[107]

The depth of Isabel's grief at the loss of her husband echoed that of her grandmother, Isabel of Portugal, and foreshadowed that of her sister, Juana. Unlike her sister, who would hold the Kingdom of Castile as queen in her own right, however, she was a young, childless, unmarried princess, and too much of a political asset to be squandered. Thus, she was forced by her parents to marry again, over her own objections. With Afonso's death the dynastic alliance had been broken, and in order to repair it, Isabel was betrothed to João II's successor, King Manuel (the cousin of her deceased husband). Possibly in an attempt to derail the betrothal, the *infanta* secretly wrote Manuel demanding as a precondition to the marriage that he immediately expell all of the "heretics" from Portugal.[108] The fact that Isabel's

105. See Rodríguez Puértolas, *Cancionero de fray Ambrosio,* 45–46, 204–6, and 211. Andrés de Li also dedicated his *Thesoro de la Passion* to the Catholic Kings: "The highest and most powerful princes, masters, and monarchs of the two Spains." This book is recorded among the queen's possessions, alongside two copies of his *Summa de paciencia;* Delbrugge, *A Scholarly Edition,* 16; and Delbrugge, *Summa de paciencia.*

106. Biblioteca Escorial: Inc. 23-V-11, f. 9r.

107. *CD,* I:427.

108. Sensitive to Isabel's position, the Catholic Kings initially proposed their daughter María as a match for Manuel, but the Portuguese king preferred Isabel, on account of her being closer in line to succeed in Castile and Aragon. Similarly Fernando and Isabel had originally offered Afonso their

remarriage was not fully consensual was something of a delicate issue for the friar to broach, given that it did not reflect particularly well on any of the parties involved in the context of a didactic manual, and so he simply passed it over. Nor does he go into the details of Isabel's marriage to Manuel. The two were designated as the heirs of Castile, after the death of the Catholic Kings' son, Juan, Prince of Asturias, in 1497. Soon after, Isabel bore a son, Miguel, but the young mother died in 1498, followed two years later by her son, thereby shifting the succession of Castile to her younger sister, Juana.[109]

But the political history of the dynasty was not what the friar was interested in—as he himself said, "This is not a book of chronicles, but rather of accounts of the particular deeds performed by women in the service of God, to serve as an example for the women of today and [those of the future] until the end of the World."[110] He was interested in Isabel because he could portray her as a woman who bore her suffering with piety, and who was a supporter of his order. Hence, he closes his account of her by noting that she was buried in the habit of a Clare at the convent her mother Isabel had founded in Toledo.[111] It was this dedication to the Franciscan movement that made the princess virtuous in the author's eyes, together with her obedience to God and family, and her devotion to her two husbands. Her grief was important because it underlined her passivity and subordination, but also because in her mourning, she was transformed into a pseudonun: penitent, chaste, devout, and self-mortifying. Nothing could console her, "except our Lord-God, to whom she, as a Catholic Christian, turned to in confession and communion time and time again."[112] He says, "She heard Mass every day, and was so immersed in devout books that no one even saw her face."[113] It was this that reverberated with Eiximenis's Franciscan view of feminine virtue and made her worthy to serve as an "example to the maidens and to married ladies, and also to widows."[114]

After Isabel's death, the Catholic Kings found themselves back at square one as regarded their matrimonial strategy vis-à-vis Portugal. Manuel I, however, was once again eligible, and they had more daughters, so on 30 October 1500, King Manuel married María de Aragón, his deceased wife's sister.[115]

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daughter Juana's hand, but he insisted on marrying Isabel for the same reason. See Nogales Rincón, "Los proyectos matrimoniales," 50–52.

109. Oliveira e Costa, *D. Manuel I,* 88–94.

110. *CD,* I:430.

111. *CD,* I:429.

112. *CD,* I:428.

113. *CD,* I:428.

114. *CD,* I:428.

115. Zurita, *Historia del Rey Don Hernando,* 115–17.

Clearly both the Houses of Castile and of Portugal were determined to establish a dynastic if not a political union, and they would do so even at the cost of blatantly ignoring the laws of the church against consanguineous marriage. María and Manuel had nine children, including seven sons and two daughters, and among them the future João III of Portugal and Empress Isabel. Given this happier scenario, the author of the *Carro de las donas* recounted María's biography in some detail based on interviews he conducted with the deceased rulers' former confessors. As for her moral virtues, he emphasized María's devotion, which she exercised with such enthusiasm that he characterized her as embodying simultaneously "the two careers of heaven, which is to say, the active life and the contemplative life."[116] She is depicted as a "holy and very devout queen" (*sancta y muy devota reyna*), and as a good daughter to Isabel the Catholic.[117] In fact, he describes her in similar terms to those used of her mother: always devout, surrounded by worthy religious men, praying, giving alms to the poor, and donating to the church. Specifically, she is remembered for having founded a Hieronymite monastery, and having contributed to her husband's major work of patronage, the convent of Our Lady of Belem in Lisbon. Like her sister, she too would be buried in the habit of a Poor Clare, and interred in the Clarissan convent of Our Lady of Lisbon.

The final chapter on Isabel the Catholic's daughters turns to the lives of Juana and Catalina (Catherine), both of whom present rather more problematic profiles. Like her sister, Isabel, Juana suffered a debilitating bout of grief following the death of her young husband, Felipe the Handsome, in 1506. The difference was that she did not recover, and she certainly did not receive any help to do so. Also, Juana was a queen in her own right and, therefore, was supposed to be ruling at the time, not grieving. Moreover, his patroness, Catalina, had grown up with her mother and had undoubtedly been traumatized by the experience. Finally, at the time that the *Carro* was written, Juana was still alive, and still, at least by title, queen of Castile, and the mother of the powerful emperor Carlos V, not to mention of the queens of Denmark, France, and Portugal. The matter of Juana was a delicate subject, to say the least. Thus, the author avoided hyperbolic descriptions of mourning in his depiction of Juana of Castile, and instead noted soberly: "She was so affected by the death of her husband that she fell into sickness from which she never again recovered."[118] Nor was there much to recount regarding Juana's career before her illness—she had had little opportunity

116. *CD,* I:430.
117. *CD,* I:432–33.
118. *CD,* I:435.

to distinguish herself as a patroness in her short reign, and so the best the friar could do was to provide a rather vague and guarded testament to her character: "Before this illness, she was of very clear intellect, and very wise, and very well-read, and of very clear conscience, a very great friend of all that is good."[119] Her major achievement seems to have been giving birth to her extraordinary son, Emperor Carlos V, characterized as "fortunate" (*afortunado*) in everything he did. To say any more would have been to risk provoking his patroness, even if only by reminding her of the difficult experiences she had witnessed her mother suffer. By the same token, his portrayal of Isabel of Aragon's grief and his praise of her character may have served to subtly rehabilitate the image of Juana—evidently a kindred spirit—in the eyes of her daughter.

Recounting the experiences of the Catholic Kings' fourth daughter, Catalina/Catherine (1485–1536), was hardly less problematic, and again there are some similarities between her case and that of Isabel. Catherine was sent to England in 1501 as the betrothed to Arthur, the heir of the Tudor crown; they married, but within a year the young prince was dead. According to the author of the *Carro,* at this point Catherine had wished to return to Spain and take up the life of a nun at the Clarissan convent of Santa Isabel of Toledo. However, it was not to be; once again, the political program of the Catholic Kings took precedence over the wishes of a daughter, and in 1503 the widowed princess was married (again, in all violation of the laws of consanguinity) to her deceased husband's brother, Prince Henry, the future Henry VIII of England (1509–47). What followed was as well known to contemporaries as it is to students of history today.[120] After a long marriage, in which Catherine bore Henry several children, including Mary, the sole survivor, who would eventually reign as queen of England, her husband's affections settled on one of her ladies-in-waiting, Anne Boleyn. So taken was Henry that in 1527 he petitioned Clement VII to have the dispensation he had been granted to marry Catherine annulled. Faced with the pope's refusal, Henry declared himself to be the head of an independent Church of England that owed no obedience to Rome.

Again, these were delicate matters for the friar to broach, given the scandal and shame that this episode had provoked; instead, he leaves out all of these

119. *CD,* I:435.

120. Regarding Catherine of Aragon, see Tremlett, *Catherine of Aragon;* Elston, "Widow Princess," 16–30; Starkey, *Six Wives,* 11–256; Bernard, *The King's Reformation,* 1–72; and Collette, *Performing Polity,* 123–40. See the conclusion.

details and simply says that Henry and Catherine had had some trouble, and that what followed in England was the work of Satan and his allies: "malignant, perverse, and bad Christians with bad intentions."[121] Catalina/Catherine, he says, brooked her sufferings with patience, confession, and prayer, and that her undue suffering had made a martyr of her in the sight of God. "Although her sisters were more virtuous, she, by virtue of her martyrdom, went on to reign in heaven."[122] This was hardly a panegyric, but by lauding the first two of the Catholic Kings' daughters, the author had painted himself into something of a corner; if he did not include Juana and Catherine he might be seen to be tacitly condemning them.

Holy Widows

With such awkward but politically necessary exempla out of the way, the friar could turn to more promising models of devotion and virtue—widows who endured the loss of their husbands while retaining their sanity, and who, rather than remarrying, went on to dedicate their lives to the service of God, the poor, and the Observant Franciscans. The two women he focused on were Teresa de Quiñones and Teresa Enríquez, both well known for their extreme piety, and both contemporaries of the Catholic Kings. The two women were also related to Fernando the Catholic through his mother's side, and therefore, were kin to Catalina of Habsburg and Carlos V.[123] In general, the author of the *Carro* takes the same position on widows as had Eiximenis, although he incorporates some of the ideas developed by Vives in his *Instruction of a Christian Woman,* and adds his own editorializations. Like Eiximenis and Vives, the author praises the state of widowhood as virtuous, and he advises widows not to remarry, but rather to use the opportunity to serve God. Like the *Llibre de les dones,* the *Carro* recognizes that widowhood can impart freedom to those women whose husbands behaved like tyrants. That said, he had no sympathy for "those women who want to have all at their pleasure and will, and do not want to be under the authority of their husbands."[124] In other words, widowhood was only "a very decent state," for those who eschewed the temptations of the world, and those widows who did not take their freedom as an opportunity to

121. *CD,* I:436.

122. *CD,* I:435.

123. *CD,* I:441. The chapters devoted to these two widows are in book 3. Teresa de Quiñones appears in chapters XXII and XXIII; *CD,* I:502–12. Teresa Enríquez also merits two chapters: chapters XXIIII and XXV; *CD,* I:512–21.

124. *CD,* I:443.

frequent bullfights and tournaments, attend parties, and spend their money on clothes and jewelry, instead of on the church, the Franciscans, and the poor.[125]

Teresa de Quiñones (c. 1454/56–81) was one of those exemplary widows. After her husband's death, she dedicated her time and fortune to feeding and clothing the poor, founding monasteries, and praying. Her piety was well known to contemporaries, especially Franciscans, and the author noted that he based his account on the writings of fellow friars, including Juan de Hempudia (or Ampudia), Antonio de Belmonte, and Juan de Ayllón, as well as others who spoke to him about her.[126] Teresa was the daughter of Diego Fernández de Quiñones and María Álvarez de Toledo, the Counts of Luna. Having been born into a leading Castilian family, she married into another one with her matrimony with Fadrique Enríquez de Mendoza (c. 1390–1473), the admiral of Castile. They had four sons and four daughters. Previously the admiral had been married to María Fernández de Córdoba, who was the mother of Juana, who reigned in Aragon (1444–68) as queen consort of Joan II, and bore the king his son and heir, Fernando.

During her childhood and youth Teresa already had a reputation for virtue, and this was reinforced after her marriage. According to the *Carro* she was "holy and devout" and kept her house like "a very honorable monastery"; moreover, the author took pains to praise not only Teresa herself, but the whole of her line—and, thereby, by extension and association, Catalina of Habsburg.[127] In his view, one of her chief virtues was her strong support of his order. In his words, she was "very devout regarding the Observant Franciscans," and is credited with providing the support necessary for the order to hold their general chapter in the convent of Palenzuela in 1470.[128] In 1491 she became a major patroness of the order, when together with Fadrique Enríquez, she founded the Franciscan monastery of Nuestra Señora de la Esperanza, or Valdescopezo, near Medina de Rioseco, just north of Valladolid. It would be here that she buried her husband, and where, as a widow, she would live out her days. There she built a small house, said to be not much more than a confessional booth, and set right beside the *altar mayor,* where she heard Mass and prayed each day, and generously dispensed alms to the poor. So openhanded was she in this regard, according to the

125. *CD,* I:439.
126. Regarding Ampudia, see Messeguer Fernández, "Juan de Ampudia," 163–77.
127. *CD,* I:503.
128. *CD,* I:506.

Carro, that she was granted a miracle. In an echo of the miracle of the loaves and fishes, when Teresa found herself running out of ingredients to bake bread for the legions of alms-seekers that flocked to her, she prayed to God, who answered her by filling a room with flour.[129] This was irreproachable proof that she was worthy to serve as an "example that maidens, married women, and widows, and even gentlemen ought to imitate in the service of God, our Lord."[130]

After Teresa, the *Carro de las donas* turns to her granddaughter, Teresa Enríquez, who was even more pious. She was the daughter of Alfonso Enríquez de Quiñones (the half brother of Queen Juana Enríquez) and María de Alvarado y Villagrán, which made her a cousin (removed) of Catalina of Habsburg. María del Mar Graña Cid and other historians have pointed out that she was most likely illegitimate, but this is not a matter that the author of the *Carro* addresses.[131] In any event, whatever moral stain may have characterized her birth was washed away by her upbringing, given that her "holy grandmother" (*sancta agüela*) raised her, after her own mother had died. It is said that she wanted to be a nun, but was unable to, her father having decided to wed her around 1470 to Gutierre de Cárdenas, a nobleman who held the very important post of *comendador mayor* (senior commander) in the service of the Catholic Kings. This match brought Teresa firmly into the orbit of the court, and into the intimate circle of Isabel the Catholic, of whom, it seems, she became a close friend.[132]

Teresa's life at court took a dramatic turn in 1503, first with the death of her husband, and then, a year later, with that of Queen Isabel. It was at that point that, after having led a life worthy of imitation by young ladies and wives, she became a model for widows, by installing herself at the Palace of Torrijos and beginning a life of devotion that would last until her death in 1529. In the words of the author of the *Carro* this was a "second marriage," in which Jesus Christ was both husband and father, and the Virgin Mary her special Lady and intercessor.[133] Here, Teresa dedicated herself not only to prayer, but to good works, supporting the poor in years of famine and need. Her reputation was such that poor people from all over Castile were drawn to her palace outside Toledo, and her many good works included almsgiving, founding a school for orphans, and a hospital, providing dowries for poor women, redeeming captives held in Muslim lands, and donating to monastic

129. *CD,* I:509–10.
130. *CD,* I:512.
131. Graña Cid, "El mecenazgo franciscano," 53.
132. Segura Graíño, "Las sabias mujeres."
133. *CD,* I:517.

and mendicant orders.[134] Indeed, this was what endeared her most to the author, and sealed her reputation of sanctity in his eyes. Not only did she and her husband establish the Observant Franciscan monastery of Santa María de Jesús, where they were both buried, but she also founded four more on her own: two in Torrijos, one in Maqueda, and another in Almería. Incontestable proof of her righteousness was the fact that between these foundations and her other pious works, she ran through the immense fortune she had inherited from her husband almost in its entirety. This was, indeed, a model of virtue.

One might view such generosity as excessive, particularly given that in the view of Eiximenis and his ilk one of women's characteristic weaknesses is their inability to control their compulsions and exhibit the cardinal virtue of temperance. But, as Martín de Córdoba tried to assure Isabel the Catholic in his *Jardín de nobles doncellas,* women may do everything in excess by their nature, but this is not necessarily good or bad.[135] Thus, in the *Carro de las donas* Teresa is not portrayed in a bad light for her excess, because it was "good excess." As opposed to Juana the Mad's "bad excess," which was a symptom of self-immersion in grief, Teresa's compulsion served a greater good and was framed as piety. Hers was an excess worthy of imitation, and the suffering she underwent was presented as an external manifestation of her piety.

The *Carro*'s depiction of Teresa's piety seems exaggerated, but contemporaries corroborate it; none other than Pope Julius II (1503–13) referred to Teresa as "the Madwoman of the Host" (La Loca del Sacramento)—a nickname that stuck. In 1507 she had contacted him for support regarding her foundations, and had sent him an expensive gift of gold- and silk-embroidered cloth for his chapel.[136] Her particular obsession with the Host was manifested not only in her idiosyncratic devotionary practices, but her founding of a number of Eucharistic confraternities, and a Conceptionalist convent at Almería. Such was the exuberance of her piety that she was also known as "the Drunkard of Celestial Wine" (La Embriagada del Vino Celestial) and "God's Fool" (La Boba de Dios).[137] Not all were unanimous in praising her, however, as some laymen were not convinced hers was the

134. *CD,* I:519–20.

135. This work was first printed in 1500, and reprinted in 1542, at the same time as the *Carro de las donas.* See Gil Fernández, "El Humanismo en Castilla," 17.

136. Bayle, *La Loca del Sacramento,* 301–3 (doc. 3); Graña Cid, "El mecenazgo franciscano," 62; Castro y Castro, *Teresa Enríquez,* 167.

137. Graña Cid, "El mecenazgo franciscano," 54–55; and Castro y Castro, *Teresa Enríquez,* 17.

type of model that should be imitated.[138] Gómez Manríque, for example, had written to Isabel the Catholic, cautioning her against extremism and advising her to keep her piety in reasonable proportion.[139] Among the most concerned regarding Teresa's zeal was her own son, Diego de Cárdenas, who had no choice but to watch as his mother dissipated what would have been his inheritance, building monasteries and feeding the poor. Nor was this lost on outside observers. Andrea Navagero, the ambassador of Venice to the court of Carlos V, described her as a lady generous with the church, but stingy with her heir:

> In Torrijos there is a handsome monastery of the Hieronymites, founded by the woman of Cárdenas, the sister of the Admiral, who is named Lady Teresa Enríquez; and she has a son, who is the *Adelantado* of Granada. She is very old, and she gives very little of her incomes to her son, who is now old himself, and desires to have this money, all of which his mother is spending on monasteries and devotional projects, which is why when people ask him how he is, he answers quite openly that he suffers from a new illness that men do not usally suffer from, namely, hysteria (*mal de madre*).[140]

For the purposes of the author of the *Carro,* however, both Teresa Enríquez and her grandmother, Teresa de Quiñones, were ideal models, and near saints. They were devout to the extreme, but without being self-destructive. Moreover, their holiness did not generate suspicion on the part of the church, because they made no claim to authority; they saw no visions, heard no voices, and (the miracle of the flour aside) claimed no other experiences that were supernatural or might undermine the ecclesiastical or celestial hierarchies, as they were understood. Most

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138. For example, in the *Chronicle of the bufón Francisco de Zúñiga* and in the account by the Italian traveler Andrea Navagero, she is portrayed as neither kind nor supportive. On the other hand, she is described in a manner very similar to that of the *Carro* in Juan Pérez de Moya's *Varia historia de sanctas e ilustras mujeres.* See Graña Cid, "El mecenazgo franciscano," 55. Similarly, the Count of Cedillo portrayed Teresa as "most pious since her infancy, distinguishing herself very particularly for three qualities, which were the austerity of her lifestyle, her fervent devotion to the sacrament of the altar, and her burning charity toward the infirm. This was why her contemporaries referred to her as 'the Saint,' 'the Fool of God' (La boba de Dios), and 'the Madwoman of the Sacrament' (La loca del Sacramento). Pope Julius II called her 'the Drunkard of Celestial Wine.'" Cit. Castro y Castro, *Teresa Enríquez,* 17.

139. See chapter 4.

140. Cited by Bayle, *La Loca del Sacramento,* 102–3. *Mal de madre* (pain in the uterus) was the contemporary term for "hysteria," which was believed to be a disease related to the uterus. Navagero is punning on the fact that Diego's situation was caused by his mother, and was, therefore, an "illness of the mother."

importantly, for this anonymous friar, both were advocates and protectors of the Observant Franciscans, as was well documented in the chronicles of the order. This is precisely what he wanted Catalina of Habsburg, her daughter Maria Manuela, and other high-status women of the time to aspire to. The model women of the *Carro* displaced the exemplary figures of the *Llibre de les dones,* who were too remote in terms of era, culture, and lineage to motivate Catalina and her circle; by evoking Isabel the Catholic and her daughters and the two Teresas the author channeled women who were not only of the same era as his patroness, but of the same family, and in numbers. This full court press in support of the Observant Franciscans was all the more urgent in the mid-sixteenth century given the competition for patronage and favor the order faced. At the beginning of the sixteenth century Pope Leo X had formally severed the Observant Franciscans from the Conventuals with his bull "Ite vos in veniam meam," and by this time other orders, particularly the Hieronymites, were also capturing the imagination and the support of the aristocracy. In 1502 Manuel I had made the Hieronymites the resident order at his new Mosteiro da Santa Maria de Belém (Convent of Our Lady of Bethlehem), founded in Lisbon as a pantheon for the Aviz dynasty, and in 1563, Felipe II would appoint them as custodians of his palace-monastery, San Lorenzo de El Escorial. By this time, however, the Jesuits would be the new star ascendant among the Catholic religious orders; the age of the Observant Franciscans had passed.

Beyond the *Chariot of Ladies*: What Catalina Said to Maria Manuela

Whatever the *Carro* and the many other books of instruction that Catalina kept in her well-stocked library may have recommended in terms of virtue and piety, the queen's actual advice to her own daughter as to how she should comport herself as queen and wife was quite down-to-earth.[141] Catalina and João III produced a set of brief instructional essays (*lembranças,* or "recollections") for their daughter, Maria Manuela, which they wrote in Portuguese in their own hands. The queen authored one of the texts, and the king

141. For the most part, Catalina's books were works written in Spanish by authors such as Antonio de Guevara, Juan de la Encina, and Juan Manrique, as well as chronicles and songbooks (*cancioneros*), along with works by classical authors, such as Seneca, Plutarch, and Livy, not to mention works by Eiximenis. For an inventory of her library, see Viterbo, *A livraria real,* 26–41; see also Buescu, *Catarina de Austria,* 268.

two shorter pieces, which together comprised a sort of *speculum principum*.[142] They are not dated, but given that they were intended to be presented to the newly wed Princess of Asturias, they must have been written around 1543, the year in which on 14 November the princess, aged sixteen, had a spectacular wedding in Salamanca. The betrothal had finally been agreed to on 1 December 1542, and ratified on 12 May 1543.[143]

In her composition, Queen Catalina prefaces her advice by assuring her daughter that the king agrees with the counsel she is setting down, and an admonition: "And I request that you look at these many times, as I know you will do."[144] The fact that the text is brief—unlike the voluminous and exhaustive conduct books produced by the likes of Eiximenis and Vives—would have made it considerably more likely actually to be read. These instructional essays are quite concise, and they do not include the long lists of detailed examples and illustrative anecdotes typical of the genre. Because Catalina was, it seems, a genuinely devout and pious queen, she begins her text by advising her daughter not to neglect her religious obligations, including attending Mass, and giving alms. Then she presents her daughter with a model queen—but not one that appeared in the *Llibre* or the books it inspired. She does not hold up Isabel the Catholic or her daughters as examples. Instead, Catalina looks to a new model queen—Isabel, the empress of Castile, who had passed away four years earlier giving birth to her sixth child.

Isabel was the daughter of María of Aragon, the Catholic Kings' daughter and the second wife of Manuel I of Portugal. She was the sister of João III and had been Carlos V's only wife, and was the mother of his heir, Felipe II. Thus, in the incestuous circles of the Portuguese and Castilian dynasties, she and Catalina were not only cousins, but twice in-laws. By all accounts she was a beautiful and intelligent woman, very much loved by her husband,

142. They are preserved in a seventeenth-century manuscript, *Memorias do secretario d'estado Antonio Carneiro,* which also includes documents by his son, Pero de Alcaçova; British Museum: Additional Manuscripts, ms. 20805, f. 167. The texts are edited in Costa Lobo, "Infanta D. Maria." Carlos V also wrote instructions for his son, Felipe, in 1543, when he was a newlywed and regent of Spain, and then again in 1548, to instruct him on foreign policy. See Fernández Alvarez, *Corpus documental,* 2:569–92.

143. Detailed accounts of María and Felipe's wedding survive as *Entrada en España de la princesa María de Portugal, hija del rey de Portugal D. Juan, i su casamiento con el príncipe D. Felipe II en Salamanca* (BNE: Sig. 11907, ff. 7r-16v); *Nuevas noticias de las fiestas que se hicieron en Salamanca a la entrada de la princesa doña María de Portugal el 10 de noviembre de 1543, con motivo de su matrimonio con el príncipe de Asturias, Felipe . . .* (RAH: Sig. 9/48); and *Recibimiento que se hiço en Salamanca a la princesa Doña María de Portugal viniendo a casarse con el príncipe Don Felipe II* (BNE: Ms. 4013, ff. 13r-58v).

144. Costa Lobo, "Infanta D. Maria," 177. See Silleras-Fernandez, "Inside Perspectives" for a detailed analysis of the *lembranças.*

a competent ruler, and a well-respected figure at her court, who served as regent of Spain during her husband's absences from 1529 to 1532, and from 1535 to 1539. Were these attributes not enough, she made a particularly good example for Maria Manuela to study because, like the newly wed princess, the empress had been raised in Portugal and was being sent off to the Castilian court. Maria Manuela would come under the same pressures that Isabel had: to quickly learn and adapt to the rules of a new court, and to immediately incorporate unknown local ladies and retainers in her own household.

Thus, Catalina instructed Maria Manuela to gather information about the life and character of her deceased mother-in-law from those Portuguese ladies at the Spanish court who had known her. Catalina advised, "Seek to find out much regarding the things in which the Empress occupied herself, and all that she did during her life, so that you may do the same, and take as an example, her great virtues."[145] Empress Isabel was not known to have been a particularly devout queen, and would not have been the type of individual whom Eiximenis or the author of the *Carro* would have held up as an example, but she was a tremendous success as a politically powerful and active queen, and this is what Catalina wanted for her own daughter. In fact, when the empress first moved to Castile she was encouraged to follow the model of her own grandmother, Isabel the Catholic—the most recent among the local and prestigious figures with whom she was to conform, assuring continuity in the model of queenship.[146] In a similar fashion, Carlos V deliberately modeled the first household (1535–48) of Prince Felipe on that of his uncle Juan, the son of the Catholic Kings.[147]

The queen's next recommendation lay closer to that of the Franciscan moralists, at least on the surface, and this was that Maria Manuela should obey her husband, Felipe, and his father, Carlos V. But, again, her motives were practical and profane; Maria's goal should be to ingratiate herself with her husband so that he obeyed his father, and to make herself esteemed and trusted by both by her words and comportment. She was to be discrete and guard well her husband's secrets and matters of state, all with the aim of making herself trusted as a counselor and seen as fit to serve as a future regent. Next, Catalina went on to discuss how Maria

145. Costa Lobo, "Infanta D. Maria," 177.

146. Valgoma y Díaz-Valera, *Norma y ceremonia,* 2; Mazarío Coleto, *Isabel de Portugal,* 80; and Muñoz Fernández, "La casa delle regine," 92–93.

147. Sánchez-Molero, "Felipe II," 78–79.

Manuela should guard her reputation, and avoid focusing her attention on a single "favorite," instead gathering a group of ladies who were known to be honest and upright. Four or five of these women were to sleep in her chamber whenever her husband was away, to avoid the risk of any spurious accusations of infidelity. With influence and power came danger, and thus Catalina advised her daughter not to do the very thing she herself was doing: "It is my opinion that you should never write to anybody in your own hand."[148] This is testimony of how important personal writing had become, the degree to which it endowed communication with authority, and to what extent it could be manipulated.[149] This was no longer the era of Maria de Luna, when a queen might add her signature or a few lines to the letters she dictated to her secretary, or that of Isabel the Catholic, when noblewomen penned letters to their confessors but few others; by the sixteenth century, women were truly writing, and with this came all the power and danger of putting one's most delicate orders and thoughts to paper.

One thing that had not changed, however, was the fact that queens were seen as intercessors between their husbands and their subjects, a role moralists since the time of Eiximenis attributed to them when they invoked the model of the biblical Esther. Catalina knew that from the moment Maria Manuela arrived in Castile she would begin to receive petitions from her new subjects with the expectation she would pass these on to her husband. This would give her power and the political capital with which to build her own network of influence. But this was to be undertaken with care, and with the close support of the former ladies-in-waiting of Empress Isabel, and other Portuguese courtiers.[150] Catalina and João insisted so strongly that Maria Manuela's entourage be stocked with individuals loyal to them that they clashed with Carlos V on this point.[151] And so, for instance,

148. Costa Lobo, "Infanta D. Maria," 178.

149. For instance, in a letter to her brother, Carlos V, Catalina appears very touched that he had written her by hand to congratulate her on the birth of her daughter. See Viaud, *Lettres des souverains,* 137, doc. 51 (Lisbon, 4 June 1529). For example, Felipe II wrote letters in his own hand to his daughters, Isabel Clara Eugenia and Catalina Micaela, and they replied in kind. These communications, which were private in character, were supposed to be destroyed after they were read. See Bouza, *Cartas de Felipe II,* 12–13. Regarding the development of private correspondence in the early modern period, see Foisil, "L'écriture du for privé."

150. Labrador Arroyo, "La casa de la emperatriz," 135–71; Labrador Arroyo, *La casa de la emperatriz,* 1:82.

151. Carlos V wanted to appoint Francisco de Borja, Duke of Gandia and Viceroy of Catalonia, and his Portuguese wife, Leonor de Castro, to the two most important positions in Maria Manuela's court, but João III and Catalina succeeded in opposing the nominations. See Sousa, *Anais,* 2:217–19; Buescu, *Catarina de Austria,* 272–73; and Mendes Drumond Braga, *Um espaço,* 67–68.

Margarita de Mendoza, the widow of Jorge de Mello, was appointed as her head chambermaid (*camarera mayor*), Aleixo de Meneses became her *mayordomo,* and Fray Antonio, her confessor.[152] Catalina was well aware that Maria Manuela was young and inexperienced, little more than a child, and so she advised her to move slowly. Most of all, she was to avoid making any mistakes she might live to regret: "In these first days, I think you ought to demur with courteous language, and not accept a petition for your husband from anyone."[153] Catalina ends by advising her daughter to be prudent (and thereby) wise, honest, and just.

In the two short pieces he wrote, João III gave similar advice to Maria Manuela, recommending that she be faithful to both the emperor and his son, her husband, but added his own nuances. For one, he emphasized that while Maria Manuela should keep her husband's secrets, it was crucial that they hold no secrets from each other: "One of the things that brings a married couple closer is that they do not keep secrets from one another in private matters; you should be sure that things are the same between the two of you."[154] For João, Catalina had always been his most trusted and reliable counselor; the king expected Maria Manuela to achieve the same level of confidence with Felipe, and asked her to work for it. He also underlined that Maria Manuela needed to be vigilant regarding not only any information she might divulge, but also whatever information she received, given that "the greatest deceptions that Princes fall for come from information that seems reasonable."[155] He also goes further in terms of the princess's retinue, providing a detailed list of people she should depend on, including Margarita de Mendoza. The king's second text continues in the same practical line, providing advice on how to organize her travel, and her royal entrés, and on how to treat the people of the court, from important noblemen down to the members of her own household.[156] In the end, although neither Catalina nor João broke with the ideals of virtue expressed in didactic moralistic literature dedicated to women, they certainly did not belabor them, and the fact that their letters bear little resemblance to the *Carro de las donas* shows to what extent those texts were not necessarily considered useful models.

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152. For a full list of her household personnel, see Costa Lobo, "Infanta D. Maria," 133; Mendes Drumond Braga, *Um espaço,* 67–68; and Labrador Arroyo, "Los servidores de la princesa," 121–25.

153. Costa Lobo, "Infanta D. Maria," 178.

154. Ibid., 179.

155. Ibid.

156. Ibid., 180–81.

This comes across even more clearly in two private letters that Catalina sent to Margarita de Mendoza, her daughter's *camarera,* both of which are more pragmatic in tone and lack even the moralistic ideals expressed in her *lembranças.* On 3 January and 9 May 1544 Catalina wrote to Margarita as an anxious mother, desperate for news regarding her far-off daughter. She wanted to know what Maria Manuela was doing, how she was feeling, how her marriage was shaping up, and even what went on in the privacy of her chamber when Prince Felipe visited her.[157] It is because she wanted to have a dependable source for this sort of intimate information that Catalina had insisted so forcefully that Margarita should be given a central position in Maria Manuela's household. Margarita became, in effect, Catalina's eyes and ears in the Spanish Crown. But Margarita was no creature of Catalina's, and the queen needed to treat her gingerly, balancing familiarity and formality. Hence, she addressed her as "friend" (*amyga*) and wrote her in Castilian, which was the native tongue of both women, but signed her letters in Portuguese as "Queen" (*Raynha*); and she reminded Margarita that she had been given this prestigious position on her account, emphasizing her trust in Margarita, but also Margarita's debt to her: "I have great trust in you, as ought to be, and you merit the confidence with which I chose you."[158]

The queen was particularly concerned because of Maria Manuela's "phlegmatic" (*flemática*) character, and described her as "so reticent by nature that it drives me to despair."[159] To the modern eye, there is little curious about a teenager who is petulant or reticent to her mother, and Maria Manuela was certainly faced with pressures and demands far in excess of those of most adolescents, but to her mother there was too much of consequence at stake to allow the young future queen to stray.

Maria Manuela's best portrait is that painted by Lucas de Heere between 1543 and 1545. Here she looks attractive, if a little severe, and while she is not particularly slim, she is certainly not fat. Luis Sarmiento, the Spanish ambassador to the Portuguese court, described her as follows in a letter to Prince Felipe, who had not yet seen his bride-to-be:

> The Lady Princess is a little bit taller than her mother. She is very well figured, more fat than thin, but not in such a way that does not look very good. When she was younger she was fatter. In the palace, where there are many very pretty ladies, none is better than she. Everyone says

157. Both letters have been edited by Barata, "Cartas de Rainha," 196–97, docs. 1 and 2.
158. Barata, "Cartas de Rainha," 196.
159. Ibid., 197.

> she is an angel in character and very generous, and quite sophisticated and loves much to dress well. She dances very well and knows how to sing better than a choir-master, and she also knows Latin. And most of all she is a good Christian woman, and according to her ladies, is extremely healthy and has been very regular with her period since she began to have it, which is they say the most important thing for having children.[160]

Catalina's own description of her daughter is not quite as flattering; she describes her as "fat, a big eater, and full of blood" (*gorda y comedora y llena de sangre*).[161] Maria Manuela seems to have been something of a meat lover; hence, her mother admonishes Margarita not to allow the princess to eat meat four times per day, saying she needs to lose weight to look better.[162] The queen was also concerned about how Maria Manuela treated Prince Felipe when he came to her chamber, and told Margarita to procure that he received "cuddles" (*mimos*). Marital relations between the couple were a matter of state. Catalina's brother, Carlos V, was no less eager for news of Felipe and Maria Manuela. In January 1544 he had been informed that "the prince is somewhat distant with the princess, and in Portugal they feel strongly about it."[163] But a few months later Francisco de los Cobos y Molina, secretary to the emperor, reported to him that the couple "get on together very well."[164]

Catalina probed Margarita on the most intimate details of her daughter's married life: "Let me know what they do from the time the prince comes to her house at night, until he embraces her, and who embraces whom first, because I haven't been able to find this out . . . and you are the only one who can tell me this, and this is what I want—for you to send me much information."[165] As much as her brother, the emperor, Catalina wanted news of a pregnancy, the key role of any queen being to provide an heir. And she knew how difficult this could be; by this point seven of her nine children had passed away, and she had tried for years in vain to get pregnant again, resorting to bloodletting and various other fertility treatments.[166]

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160. March, *Niñez y juventud,* 2:61. See also Jordan, *A rainha coleccionadora,* 128; and Buescu, *Catarina de Austria,* 270.

161. Barata, "Cartas de Rainha," 197.

162. Ibid., 196.

163. Cited in Kamen, *Philip of Spain,* 20.

164. Cited in Kamen, *Philip of Spain,* 20.

165. Barata, "Cartas de Rainha," 197.

166. Buescu, *Catarina de Austria,* 210.

Catalina had cause for concern. Maria Manuela suffered from scabies, a contagious mite-borne parasitic infection that causes irritation and scarring. During outbreaks of the disease it was unlikely that she and Felipe would sleep together. The queen was concerned about the medical treatment the princess was receiving: bloodletting from her foot (and not from her arm, as she preferred); and she disclosed to Margarita that she too had suffered from this condition when she had come to Portugal as the wife of João III. And while she expressed her skepticism about the efficacy of medical treatment—"which for the most part does more harm than good"—it evidently did not occur to her to recommend prayer as either a consolation or a cure.[167]

As it was, Maria Manuela did eventually recover and managed to get pregnant, although she died just four days after giving birth to her son, Carlos, on 12 July 1545. She was seventeen years old.[168] She had spent less than two years at the Spanish court, and never had the opportunity to reign as queen, let alone develop a queenly image. Francisco de los Cobos sent the sad news to the emperor, reporting that Felipe "felt the loss deeply, which shows that he loved her," but added cryptically, "Some took a different view of his outward reactions."[169] Felipe was evidently not a widower entirely in the model of the *Carro de las donas.*[170]

In sum, the kings and queens of late medieval and early modern Iberia may not have viewed the writings of Eiximenis and the Franciscan moralists who followed him as a prescription for political action, but they certainly appreciated their importance both within private life and as a tool in fashioning their political image. Hence, when Carlos V's daughter, Juana, departed for Castile in 1544 to marry Catalina's son, João, the heir to the throne of Portugal, the book that she brought with her was none other than the *Carro de las donas.* Undoubtedly, her choice was influenced by the fact that the book was dedicated to her mother-in-law (and aunt), and had been produced by a Franciscan in her service at the Portuguese court.[171] But it was no empty gesture, and the book had an effect on Juana. When João died in 1559, and she returned to Spain as a dowager princess, she founded the Clarissan

167. Barata, "Cartas de Rainha," 197.

168. Michaelis de Vasconcelos, *A infanta D. Maria de Portugal,* 44.

169. Cited by Kamen, *Philip of Spain,* 20.

170. Twenty-three years later, in 1568, their son Carlos, who was widely regarded as mentally unstable, died in prison, where his father confined him for plotting a revolt against him.

171. In Juana's book inventory (1573) the *Carro* is listed as "a book that bears the title *Chariot of the Ladies,* in a gilded binding with leaves covered with heavy paper and black leather, gilded in places, with black ribbons, valued at 750." See Sánchez-Molero, "Portugal y Castilla," 1661; Sánchez-Molero, *La "librería rica",* 482 n. 731.

monastery of the Reales Descalzas in Madrid—the library of which was also home to the works of Eiximenis. In any case, Juana of Habsburg did not profess as a Franciscan; on the contrary, it seems that she became the first and only female Jesuit, authorized by Ignacio de Loyola himself. And for his part, on 30 April 1576 Felipe II donated four copies of the *Libro de las donas* to the library of his monastery-palace of El Escorial.[172] If Eiximenis and his heirs were less successful in their declared goal of transforming the pious culture of the Spanish queens, there is no doubt that the production and promotion of these didactic texts led to the support and patronage of the Observant movement in the highest aristocratic circles.

172. Zarco Cuevas, *Catálogo razonado,* vol. 3, appendix XII, 465–94.

Conclusion

Feminine Virtue, Female Agency, and the Legacy of Eiximenis

> So that the Christian Faithful and Your Highness [Queen Catalina] may benefit, I humbly beg that [this book] may serve to be read, and that in reading, the good which Your Highness finds in it will give glory to God . . . and I also give thanks to Your Highness, because sheltered by your wings, you gave me the favor and force to finish it.
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> *Carro de las donas,* II:685–86

After the *Carro de las donas* was published in 1542 for Catalina of Habsburg, interest in Francesc Eiximenis's works began to wane. From that point neither the original *Llibre de les dones* nor its Spanish versions, the *Libro de las donas* and the *Carro de las donas,* would be published again until modern editions appeared (the *Llibre* in 1981, and the *Carro* in 2007). Eiximenis's other texts were forgotten too, and either were not published until the twentieth century or remain unpublished today, and are only available in manuscript form or in early printed editions. In spite of the success of his work during his lifetime and in the century that followed, and the greater recognition that his writings gained with the invention of the printing press, all of this had come to an end by the second half of the sixteenth century.

In 1542 a second edition of another medieval text, Martín de Córdoba's "mirror of princesses," *Jardín de nobles doncellas* (1468; first printed in 1500), was also produced. But this one also represented a final edition. Tastes were changing, and medieval texts were gradually being abandoned in favor of more current works. The culture of publication and reading was also changing; in 1559 the inquisitor Fernando de Valdés y Salas compiled the church's first Index of Forbidden Books.[1] Even in Valencia, the city Eiximenis called

1 While it is true that the Inquisition's grip on culture and science was not as tight or far-reaching as previously thought, the institution of the Index is a symptom of profound ideological changes. See Kamen, *The Spanish* Inquisition, 103–36.

home for most of his life, interest in his writings had died off. This had not been the case only a generation earlier. He was still read during the time of the Germanies (1520–22), the revolt of Valencian burghers and artisans against Carlos V that ran parallel to the Castilian Comuneros Revolt (1519–23). Indeed, his political writings were a direct inspiration for the Valencian rebel leader, Joan Llorenç. But, as Philippe Berger's study of Valencian libraries has shown, if in the second half of the sixteenth century Eiximenis's works were still being sold, they were no longer being reprinted.[2] In Berger's view Eiximenis's prestige in the city had declined markedly in the period 1546–60, when it was only the nobility who, for the most part, continued to read him.[3]

However, one thing is certain: Eiximenis was still considered a prestigious local authority at the turn of the sixteenth century, when another illustrious Valencian, Joan Lluís Vives, a humanist of *converso* origin, was still living in the city. It is all but certain he read Eiximenis's texts at this time. In 1508 at age fifteen, Vives left Valencia, never to return, embarking on a journey that took him across Europe, to emerging centers of knowledge and power, including Louvain, Bruges, and the England of Henry VIII and Catherine (Catalina) of Aragon, but keeping in touch with the Spanish court.[4] Berger has demonstrated how certain of Vives's books, notably his *De subventione pauperum* (*On the Support of the Poor:* Bruges, 1525) and his *Commentarii ad libros De civitate Dei* (*Commentary on the Books of the City of God*, 1522), had been influenced by Eiximenis.[5] Charles Fantazzi and other scholars have also noted Eiximenis's influence on Vives's *De institutione feminae christianae* (*On the Education of a Christian Woman;* 1523, revised in 1538).[6] Nonetheless, Vives was no mere imitator; he used Eiximenis's teachings, and those of another celebrated Valencian preacher, Saint Vicent Ferrer, along with a few

2 Berger, "Eiximenis en la Valencia," 106.

3 Ibid., 108. Eiximenis's works had not completely disappeared in the seventeenth century; as Genís i Mas has pointed out, the influence of his *Lo Crestià,* his ideas regarding pactism, and his apocalyptic prophecy can be seen in the works of local figures, including the Catalan historian Rafael Cervera's *Discursos históricos* (*Historical Discourses;* 1633). See Genís i Mas, "Francesc Eiximenis al segle XVII." See also Duran, "Historiografia catalana," 168. Regarding the Germanies, see García Cárcel, *Les germanies.*

4 The English queen would also have known Eiximenis's work, having been raised in the court of the Catholic Kings, which she did not leave until she was sixteen. Vives was in contact with Carlos V, and dedicated his Latin dialogues to Prince Felipe; Sánchez-Molero, *Felipe II: La educación,* 433–34.

5 Berger, "Eiximenis en la Valencia de Luis Vives," 109. Saint Augustine was an authority to whom Eiximenis frequently appealed.

6 Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman,* 24–27.

more sources, as a starting point to develop his own ideas on womanhood.[7] In this light, the *Carro de las donas* can be seen as forming an ideological bridge between Eiximenis's position regarding womanhood and that of the humanists that characterizes Vives's work, even though the *Carro* was, in fact, written after *De institutione feminae christianae.*[8] How, then, did gender discourse change from the late fourteenth century, when Eiximenis started writing his *Llibre de les dones,* to the early sixteenth, when Vives wrote *De institutione,* and the mid-sixteenth, when the *Carro de las donas* was written? And what can these literary works teach us about ideology, gender, and religion, and how does this compare with the real-life experiences of the women to whom these works referred, from Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós to Maria de Luna, and from Isabel the Catholic to Catalina of Habsburg?

From Eiximenis to the Humanist Discourse on Women

The most popular European text for the instruction of women written in the first half of the sixteenth century was Vives's *De institutione feminae christianae,* a book that he dedicated to Catherine of Aragon. As discussed in chapter 3, a translation from its original Latin into Spanish was produced by Juan Justiniano in 1528 and dedicated to Queen Germana de Foix (the second wife of Fernando the Catholic and, thus, the stepmother of the English queen Catherine).[9] Vives's text proved very popular in Spain, where it was published in 1529, 1535, 1539 (two editions), 1545, 1555, and 1584. On the other hand, there was virtually no interest in his *De officio mariti* (*On the Obligations of the Husband;* Paris, 1542), a work he dedicated to Juan de Borja, Duke of Gandia. This book was never even printed in the peninsula.[10] Scholars have always pointed out that one of the most remarkable contributions of Vives's work is his clear commitment to the education of women, whom he considered as a group "more inclined toward pleasure by [their] natural disposition."[11] His proposals in this regard were far more comprehensive and ambitious than those of the medieval authors who had preceded him.

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7 For a review of Vives's sources, see Fantazzi's introduction to Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman,* 23–35.

8 As Archer points out, "That Vives's book was seen in the sixteenth century as a complement to *Libre de les dones* is demonstrated by the use of both texts as the basis for the anonymous *Carro de les dones.*" Archer, *The Problem,* 39 n. 33.

9 See chapter 4 above.

10 Vives's *De officio mariti* was published along with his *De institutione feminae christianae* in Paris (1542) and in Milan (1561). Correia Fernandes, *Espelhos, cartas e guias,* 144–46, and n. 8; and San José Lera, "Introducción," in *La perfecta casada,* 27 n. 53.

11 Vives, *Instrucción,* trans. Justiniano, 55.

He recommended that women should read classical and other edificatory texts, and cultivate a sound knowledge of Latin. (Like Canals and Eiximenis before him, however, he frowned on the idea of women reading literature of entertainment.)[12] In actual fact, by the time he wrote his manual, ladies of the upper aristocracy, and even many high-status common women, were already becoming as educated as he was proposing, or more so. Such was the case with the daughters of the Catholic Kings, and the trend can be seen to continue with figures such as Mary I and Elizabeth I of England.[13] Hence, the recommendations he made in his manual were not a cause of the trend toward female education, but a symptom of it.

Nor was Vives's the only important humanist text on education. Erasmus's *De pueris instituendis (On Education for Children),* written around 1509 and published twenty years later, advocated a classical education for children following the lead of Plutarch's *De Liberis Educandis* and Quintilian's *Institutio oratoria.* Later, the Dutch proto-Reformer composed his *De civilitate morum puerilium* (*On the Civility of Youthful Mores;* 1530), a very successful work that Norbert Elias credits as starting a "process of civility" among both European elites and lesser classes.[14] In this regard, Castiglione was also fundamental; the third book of *Il cortegiano* focuses on a very specific type of woman: the "lady of the house" (*donna di palazzo*). The growing preoccupation with women's education is reflected in other contemporary writings in Spanish, including the work by Antonio de Guevara (c. 1481–1545), *Relox de príncipes* (*Clock Face of Princes;* 1529), a book that proved very popular in the peninsula, as well as in a broader European context. According to Guevara, "Given that it is not the general rule that all boys have clear judgment or that all girls are of poor understanding, I believe that were boys and girls taught the same, there would be as many wise women as dull-witted men."[15]

The main difference between Vives and other education-reforming moralists is that he dealt exclusively with women, while others focused almost exclusively on men. Among the most remarkable aspects of Vives's text is his

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12 Vives disliked chivalric novels and sentimental novels, such as *Cárcel de amor* (Prison of Love) and *La Celestina*: "All these books were written by idle, unoccupied, ignorant men, the slaves of vice and filth." Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman,* 75.

13 See chapter 4. In fact, Vives himself praises the education the Catholic Kings provided for their daughters. See Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman,* 61 and 69–70.

14 Elias, *The Civilizing Process,* 53–54; Chartier, "Distinction et divulgation," 50–54.

15 Guevara, *Relox de príncipes,* 573. The *Relox* was also pleasing to João III, who just a few months after it was first published in Spain ordered it to be printed in Portugal too, not translated into Portuguese, but in Spanish. Ten years later, c. 1539, Guevara dedicated his work *Menosprecio de corte y elogio de aldea* to João III. See Buescu, "Aspectos do bilinguismo portugues-castelhano," 20; Fernando Lopes, "Traduçoes portuguesas," 605–7; and Redondo, *Antonio de Guevara,* 579–697.

obsession with chastity and modesty—*pudicitia* in Latin, which derives from *pudor,* or "shame." In his words, "One that has no sense of shame cannot be chaste."[16] Needless to say, chastity was also considered fundamental for medieval women, to the extent that those who remained perpetual virgins and devoted their lives to God as nuns were seen as morally superior, and closer to God. That said, in the Middle Ages chastity tended to be one in a longer list of more general moral goals and virtues, which, like the cardinal and theological virtues, were considered to be applicable to both genders.[17] Even though Vives understood this established tradition, his "humanist" approach to womanhood showed a clear fixation on a specific type of chastity—the chastity of women, which entailed virginity before marriage, faithful conduct as a wife, and a return to sexual abstinence during widowhood. For him, this became the very essence of feminine morality and the end goal of female education: "A woman's only care is chastity; therefore when this has been thoroughly elucidated, she may be considered to have received sufficient instruction."[18] In effect, Vives reduces the earlier model of female virtue by disentangling it from extreme spiritual devotion (in a departure from the *Llibre de les dones* and the *Carro de las donas*), and focusing instead on women's bodies, and on their ability to control them and their carnal desire. In his mind, "In a woman, chastity is the equivalent of all virtues."[19] He went on, "Above all, [Woman] should be aware that the principal female virtue is chastity, and it is in itself the equal of all the others in moral worth. If this is present, one need not look for others, and if it is absent, one should disregard the others."

In a way, Vives's construction of gender is less performative than that of medieval authors like Francesc Eiximenis and Martín de Córdoba, who exhorted women to become more like men in order to attain virtue.[20] But for Vives, a woman was always a woman. Unlike the moralists who advised the young Isabel the Catholic, he could not conceive of his pupil, the English

16 Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman,* 116.

17 For example, Martín de Córdoba wrote in the *Jardín,* "Virginity is very natural in girls, more so than having teeth," and "To be the daughter of a queen is an exterior quality derived from parents; to be a virgin and chaste is an interior quality derived from one's own virtue." Córdoba, *Jardín de nobles doncellas,* 99.

18 Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman,* 47.

19 Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman,* 85.

20 I am not suggesting that performative notions as presented in the Middle Ages completely disappeared in the sixteenth century. For instance, Erasmus considered Catalina of Aragon's virtues as being very masculine: "Catherine, the Queen of England—a woman of such learning, piety, prudence, and constancy that you would find nothing in her that is like a woman, nothing indeed that is not masculine, except her gender and her body." Erasmus, *De viuda christiana* (*On Christian Widows;* 1529); cit.: Ward, *Women and Tudor Tragedy,* 41.

princess, Mary, as a future queen, even though at that point she was the only surviving child and heir of Henry VIII and Catherine of Aragon. When he composed his *De institutione* for her education, to him she was a seven-year-old girl—a child who would grow up to become a woman, and little more.[21] *De institutione* was produced in much the same circumstances as the works of Eiximenis and his adapters. The work was written for and dedicated to Catherine of Aragon, who was looking for a more up-to-date manual for the education of her daughter—one that was more current than the books that had been available in Castile to that point, such as Eiximenis's *Libro de las donas* and Martín de Córdoba's *Jardín de nobles doncellas.* Six or so years after *De institutione* was completed, Richard Hyrd (a friend of Thomas More) rendered Vives's text into English from its original Latin, a translation he also dedicated to Queen Catherine.[22] In fact, Vives also composed another pedagogical text for the young princess, Mary: *De ratione studii puerilis duae epistolae* (*Two Letters on the Method of Childhood Education;* 1523), a more detailed manual that included study plans and was more oriented toward skills necessary for government.[23]

"Catherine" was, of course, the Catholic Kings' youngest daughter, Catalina—the woman who as a consequence of her abandonment and divorce by her husband, Henry VIII, found herself at the center of the split between the Church of England and the Church of Rome.[24] While Henry's lust after Anne Boleyn and his desire to father a male heir were clearly the catalysts of their divorce, it was Catherine who was publicly faulted for not having come to her marriage with Henry chaste and virginal. It was a disingenuous claim by the English king, to say the least; after all, in 1501 Catherine had first been briefly married to his elder brother, Arthur (d. 1502), when the latter was heir to the throne. Moreover, this past relationship was not considered problematic in 1509, when Henry wed his widowed sister-in-law. But by 1525, when he wanted to get rid of her, she was portrayed as tainted and incestuous by virtue of the earlier union, although Catherine steadfastly maintained her first marriage had never been consummated (and was, therefore, null). Spurned by Henry, Catherine refused to capitulate, insisting on her rightful status as wife and queen, even after her husband married his lover in 1533. Catherine was secluded by her husband, and the last years of her life were

21 Although Mary Tudor's reign has not attracted nearly the same interest as her sister Elizabeth's tenure as queen has, there are several studies of her, notably: Richards, *Mary Tudor;* Loades, *Mary Tudor: A Life;* and Loades, *Mary Tudor: The Tragical History.*

22 Barratt, "English Translations," 298–99.

23 Vives, *The Education of a Christian Woman,* 13 (introduction).

24 See chapter 5.

spent in penitential isolation. It was probably because of this that the *Carro de las donas* portrayed her as a Catholic "martyr," who went on to reign in heaven in death.[25]

But Catherine was no mere passive wife. After the death of Arthur, she had stayed in England, and served for a time as her father's ambassador there. She actively pursued Henry, and after they were married she served as "governor of the realm," and as regent while her husband was at war in France.[26] But in sixteenth-century Europe, chastity had become the core value for women, and the increasing protagonism of women in politics and society generated anxiety among men. The many literary works of the Spanish Golden Age that address female chastity closely tied it to male honor, and the numerous examples of rape in literature attest to how much this topic captivated the imagination of writers: from Lope de Vega's *Fuente Ovejuna* to Tirso de Molina's *Burlador de Sevilla,* and Miguel de Cervantes's *La fuerza de la sangre*—to name just three well-known examples.

Unlike Eiximenis and the moralists who followed him, Vives was not interested in nuns: his treatise discussed only young women, married women, and widows.[27] He was neither a priest nor a friar, but was proud of his lay background; at times he liked to hold up his own family as a good example, particularly his mother, Blanca March, who had been denied a virtuous reputation in life as a result of persecution by the Inquisition.[28] But unlike the clerical authors studied here, such as Eiximenis and Martín de Córdoba, Vives viewed womanhood as an immutable and untemperable condition that trumped all others, including social status. For him, for example, Mary Tudor and Catherine of Aragon were women first and foremost, and royalty second.[29] That was not generally a position espoused in aristocratic mirrors of princesses, such as the *Jardín de nobles doncellas.* Martín de Córdoba's *speculum* could certainly be read by women of any social class, but it was intended

25 See chapter 5.

26 Ward, *Women and Tudor Tragedy,* 1–2.

27 On the other hand, the Jesuit Fray Juan de la Cerda (1558–1643), in his *Vida política de todas las mujeres* (*Political Life of All Women;* 1599) brings back nuns. He classifies women according to four categories: young women (ten chapters), religious ladies (twenty-nine chapters), married women (twenty-nine chapters), and widows (four chapters). See Cerda, *Vida política,* 3.

28 Vives mentions his mother in *De institutione feminae christianae, De officio mariti,* and his comments on Augustine's *Civitate Dei;* Bonilla y San Martí, *Luis Vives,* 18–21.

29 There were, of course, Portuguese writers (or Spanish authors active at the Portuguese court) who dabbled in conduct literature for women, or who wrote texts that were ostensible "defenses" of women. Examples include Francisco de Monzón's *Espejo de las princesa christiana,* Ruy Gonçalves's *Dos privilegios e praerogativas que ho genero femenino tem por dereito comun e ordenaçoes do Reino mais que ho genero masculino* (Lisbon, 1557), Juan de Espinosa's *Dialogo en laude de las mujeres,* and Cristóbal de Acosta's *Tratado en loor de las mujeres* (Venice, 1592).

specifically for the young Isabel the Catholic, and presented her as a meta-gendered being: "She is much more than a woman and in her feminine body needs to have a manly spirit."[30] She had to be a virago.

At any rate, what one can begin to discern in the second half of the fifteenth century and even more in the sixteenth century is a separation in didactic discourse between laywomen and nuns. For instance, and unlike Eiximenis, Vives, was not really interested in nuns, but rather in "active" women. By this he meant not only royal women like Catherine of Aragon and Mary Tudor, but those who lived in the world, marrying, serving their husbands, and most likely bearing children whom they would breastfeed and raise. In any case—and this is a very interesting point of Vives's work, and one that must have pleased Catherine of Aragon, who had not been able to produce a surviving male heir—for Vives, the goal of marriage was not procreation alone.[31] The shift in the attitude toward female sexual abstinence as a moral goal for all women can be seen in the new ideas defended by Martin Luther. This lawyer-cum-monk-cum-reformer argued from scripture to condemn even clerical vows of celibacy, and in illustration of the point, in 1525, he married a former Cistercian nun, Katharina von Bora. But while Protestants set about abolishing male and female monasticism and the vows of celibacy that went with them, Catholics reacted by emphasizing the difference between lay and clerical women. Expectations of the former were loosened, but nuns (and especially mystics and visionaries) were required to remain fully cloistered and in rigorous observation of their Rules.

Writing four decades later, and just a few years before the Council of Trent (1545–63)—the conclave that reformed Catholic marriage and made concubinage, bigamy, and secret marriage more punishable than before—the Franciscan adapter of the *Carro de las donas* cut a middle path between Eiximenis and Vives. For one thing, he emphatically did not include nuns as a category of "womanhood": "It is not Our intention to speak of nuns, but rather of maidens who are in the house of their parents: because a maiden can be a good wife, and a good widow, and thus come to a good end and to Glory."[32] What he did was to provide examples of women that had found a respectful place in society through their service to God, and the Franciscans. This could be accomplished through the intense practice of charity, as in the case of the queens he discussed, or through other forms of extreme devotion, as represented by Teresa de Quiñones and Teresa Enríquez—widows

30 Córdoba, *Jardín de nobles doncellas,* 87. See chapter 4.

31 Bonilla y San Martí, *Luis Vives,* 487–88.

32 *CD,* I:224.

who lived like nuns, and used all the resources at their disposal to serve the church. In fact, this trend of writing more specialized books for women who were not destined to become nuns, and that focused on the roles of wife and mother, was already apparent earlier, in Hernando de Talavera's *Avisación a la Condesa de Benavente* (*Advice to the Countess of Benavente;* c. 1473), for example. Talavera stated that the countess should organize her time well, since "out of disorder in time many evils result in the houses of *grandees.*" But he cautioned that no more than one-tenth of the twenty hours in her day should be devoted to God's work; the rest of the time she should mostly focus on attending her family and household.[33] In this regard, his advice was eminently more reasonable than the recommendations given to Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós in the *Llibre de les dones* and to Maria de Luna in the *Scala Dei;* Eiximenis wanted them to spend far more time in devotion that was practicable. Talavera's *Avisación* was written for María Pacheco at that time he was serving as prior of the monastery of the Prado and as her confessor; in other words, it was written for a married woman, whose principal obligations were her husband and children. This tendency to direct women toward marriage can also be observed in other texts, such as the anonymous *Consejos y doctrinas que un sabio daba a sus hijas* (*Advice and Doctrine a Wise Man Gave to His Daughters*), a didactic essay composed in the mid-fifteenth century that also focuses on Christian women who are destined to become wives and mothers, and to keep their households in order.[34]

The elevation of marriage as the ideal moral and social paradigm for women gained traction in the sixteenth century, not only in *De institutione feminae christianae,* but also in a series of humanist texts that were shaping discourse on gender and marriage. The emphasis on marriage and worldly education represents a substantial change on the part of medieval theologians, who considered virginity and the dedication of one's life to God as a morally superior state.[35] All of these texts are related to the "debate on women" that originated in the Middle Ages and blossomed in the early modern period. This debate encompassed an array of treatises, which scholars have tended to classify either as "defenses" of women or as "misogynist"—although clear

33 BRME: h-IV-26, f. 1r. He continues, "Time is well spent when it lasts until men deserve and achieve that great gloria that many angels embody"; RBME: h-IV-26, f. 4r. See Johnston, "A Theology of Self-Fashioning."

34 A Catalan example of a text that discusses marriage is the letter written c. 1387 by Alfons de Gandia, Marquis of Villena (1332?–1412), for her daughter Joana on the occasion of her marriage to Joan Ramon Folch de Cardona. See Archer, *The Problem,* 45–46; Cantavella, "L'educació femenina," 55–57; Cantavella, *Alfons el Vell,* 59–64.

35 Silleras-Fernandez, "Between Expectations," 353–55.

distinctions are never easy to draw, and it is necessary to examine the precise context and the author's intentions to fully understand the real implications of the book in question.[36] In any event, pedagogical discourse was never gender neutral and had not only aesthetic, but also political and social implications. Among the works that discussed marriage Erasmus of Rotterdam's *Encomium matrimonii* (*In Praise of Marriage;* 1519) figures prominently. This work was composed in honor of the matrimony of his friend Lord Mountjoy, and in it Erasmus praises the institution of marriage.[37] In that book he challenged the notion that celibacy was superior to marriage; he even stated: "I have no patience with those who say that sexual excitement is shameful and that venereal stimuli have their origin not in nature, but in sin. Nothing is so far from the truth."[38] Erasmus also supported marriage in *Christiani matrimonii institutio* (*Institution of Marriage;* Basel, 1526), a work he dedicated to Catherine of Aragon only a year before Henry VIII petitioned Pope Clement VII to annul their marriage, in which, ironically, he said that Catherine's was the "most sacred and fortunate marriage."[39] Erasmus, a renowned humanist, did not necessarily agree with his colleague Vives in everything. As their correspondence shows, it is obvious that Erasmus considered Vives's views on marriage rather too harsh and uncompromising. Erasmus even told Vives that he hoped that he was giving his real wife better treatment than what he proposed in his essays.[40]

Other such examples abound, including Pedro Luján's *Coloquios matrimoniales* (*Dialogues on Marriage;* eleven editions between 1550 and 1589), which was inspired by Erasmus's *Colloquium*s. In Luján's work, various fictional characters are paired off to discuss various aspects of marriage and to give advice about marital life.[41] In other words, the life of women in Renaissance discourse was being reduced (at least by these male moralists) to educated and faithful wives, who were to remain at home. The most popular example in Spanish of this trend was Fray Luis de León's *La perfecta casada* (*The Perfect*

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36 For the debate on women, see Archer, *The Problem,* Francomano's introduction to *Three Spanish Querelle Texts,* and the "foundational" (but now somewhat obselete) article discussing these issues in Castilian letters, Ornstein, "La misoginia y el profeminismo."

37 As Bataillon pointed out, Erasmus had a strong influence in both Spain and Portugal and in the circle of Emperor Carlos V, through writers like Alfonso de Valdés (1490–1532), although under Felipe II his ideas fell out of fashion. See Bataillon, *Erasmo y España;* Bataillon, *Études sur le Portugal.* See also Checa, "Didactic Prose," 284. Sánchez-Molero has pointed out how, at the beginning, the young prince Felipe's court in Valladolid (1541–48) became a new center of Erasmism in Spain; Sánchez-Molero, *Felipe II: La educación,* 815.

38 Rummel, *Erasmus on Women,* 66.

39 Ibid., 79.

40 Erasmus wrote to him from Basel on 29 May 1527.

41 Correia Fernandes, *Espelhos, cartas e guias,* 115.

Wife), first published in Salamanca in 1583. This was truly a best seller, one that would become even more popular than Vives's in the peninsula and for a longer time; ninety-four editions of this text were printed—right up until 1992, at which point it was still considered a very appropriate gift for married women.[42]

Fray Luis (1527–91) was an Augustinian monk, writer, and professor at the University of Salamanca, whose problems with the Inquisition landed him in prison until he was eventually rehabilitated. He wrote *La perfecta casada* for his niece, María Varela Osorio, when she was about to get married. He too retraced Vives's core arguments, although he based his work on a commentary on the thirty-first chapter of the Proverbs of Solomon, and as a result both the structure and content of his text are strongly shaped by the biblical subtext.[43] The religious and moralizing dimension of this work was emphasized by the fact that from 1583 to 1609 it was published as a double edition with another of his works, *De los nombres de Cristo* (*On the Names of Christ*).[44] For Fray Luis, the most important thing was for women and men to conform (and perform) in precise accordance the constructs of their gender roles: women had to be obedient and remain at home, and men had to be active and work outside. This, he maintained, would bring harmony to both the couple and society as a whole:

> And so God did not endow [women] with either the ingenuity that complex commerce demands, or the [physical] force which sustains war and labor, they ought to take stock in what they are, and be content with what is their fortune, and focus on their home and make it their domain, since God has made it for [Woman] only. {The Chinese disfigure the feet of their little girls at birth, so that when they are women, they will not be able to leave the house, and because in the home, such twisted [feet] are sufficient.} Just as Men are [made] for life out in public, women are [made to be] closed up; and just as Men are [made] to talk and to go forth in the light, thus [Women are made to] shut themselves up and seclude themselves.[45]

42 Lorenzo Arribas, "Fray Luis de León," 61.

43 For a comparison of Vives's and Fray Luis's texts, see Bergmann, "The Exclusion of the Feminine," 124–36. See also Rivera, *La mujer y el cuerpo femenino.*

44 Lorenzo Arribas, "Fray Luis de León," 61.

45 Fray Luis, *La perfecta casada,* 181–82 and n. 235. The sentence about the Chinese (in curly brackets) was added in the 1586 edition. This was taken from Juan González de Mendoza's *Historia de las cosas más notables, ritos y costumbres del gran Reyno de la China* (*History of the Most Notable Things, Rites, and Customs of the Great Kingdom of China*), published the same year.

In humanist discourse women were no longer encouraged to act as men to overcome the limits of their gender, and to attain virtue and position in society, and in this regard, their gender role was far more restricted and narrow than it was in the view of medieval moralists. But in reality, aristocratic women such as those discussed in this study, those who were the intended audience of these ideologues, could not just remain at home; their home was the royal court, and their role was inevitably closer to Castiglione's *donna di palazzo* than to the "secluded lady" of Vives's and Fray Luis's dreams.

Theory and Practice: Female Agency

In 1440 Diego Valera (1412–88), a squire (*doncel*) at the court of Juan II, claiming to have been "moved by zeal of truth" (*movido por zelo de verdad*), wrote a treatise to defend women from misogynist writers who were denigrating them.[46] He dedicated his book to Maria of Aragon, queen of Castile (1420–55), and the first wife of Juan II, Isabel the Catholic's father. In it Valera propounds the merits and virtues of women, and provides a list of righteous ladies whose biographies he sketches, in emulation of Boccaccio's *De mulieribus claris.* In a moment of critical reflection uncharacteristic of the period and genre, Valera remarks: "In order for every work to be well understood four things need to be established at the beginning. . . . The first is the motive for which the work was written; the second, who is it that is being spoken to; the third, what is the subject at hand; the fourth, what is the objective of the work."[47]

Writing four hundred years later, Barthes may not have approved, but Valera evidently felt that both audience and authorial intention were indeed key elements in understanding a work—far from being "dead," for him the author was very much alive in the work.[48] And such has been the aim of the present study, to shed light on the author, audience, and intentions of the author of the *Llibre de les dones,* the *Scala Dei,* and its Castilian translations, including the much altered adaptation known as *Carro de la donas.* By historicizing these literary works one can see how the Franciscan model of feminine virtue was presented to different recipients to suit the ends of the authors. And by historicizing these readers, one can see how each put these works to her own use. Countess Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós of Prades, Queen Maria de Luna of Aragon, Queen Isabel the Catholic of Castile, her granddaughter, Queen

46 Valera, *Tratado en defensa,* 51.
47 Valera, *Tratado en defensa,* 61.
48 Barthes, "The Death of the Author."

Catalina of Habsburg of Portugal, and *her* granddaughter, Maria Manuela, each appropriated the Franciscan message according to their own agenda. The aims of the writers and readers did not coincide; they were not only distinct, but often at cross-purposes. Nevertheless, if to some extent the books' dedications represented mere conceits for the authors, by the same token, the moral content of these treatises was often ignored by their royal readers, or manipulated as a means of expressing their power as women under the cover of piety. On many levels these works consisted of convenient fictions that both the authors and the readers were aware of and participated in.

As can happen with scholarly readers today, Eiximenis's translators and adapters had lost the context of his books, and so they understood and rewrote them to imbue them with new meanings rooted in their own particular times, to suit their own particular agendas, and shaped them to appeal to their own particular patronesses and readers, thereby giving new nuances to the model of what a virtuous Christian lady ought to be. Correspondingly, and no less than today, authors have no control over the interpretation of their works, or how their texts are understood and appropriated.

Moreover, the women to whom these books were dedicated also had a direct impact on their content, and on the way the authors formulated their arguments. These were, after all, extremely powerful women, in an age when commoners and clerics defied royal will and sensibilities at their own peril. Thus, one can think of these women, as Roger Chartier would put it, as "dictating" these dedications to their authors, and not the reverse.[49] Because of the importance of patronage in shaping these works, and the dependency of authors on benefactors that this engenders, we should be able to apply some of the same principles to literary work that have recently been proposed for the study of the role of female patrons in art and architecture.[50] Indeed, we can perceive the image of queens and noblewomen through the books they commissioned, those that were offered to them (to their husbands, and sometimes even to their children), and those that they owned or exchanged.[51]

We have observed, for example, that Francesc Eiximenis tempered some of his misogynist ideals in his books, when he was writing for or dedicating a piece to a powerful woman. This shows how conflicted the portrayal of elite women was, between power and subordination. And thus, understanding

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49 Chartier points out how the dedications were "central to the economy of patronage, which obligated the dedicatee to accord protection, employment, or remuneration in exchange for the book dedicated, offered, and accepted." Chartier, *Forms and Meanings,* 41 and 42.

50 Martin summarizes women's participation in art as "patrons and facilitators, producers and artists, owners and recipients." Martin, "Exceptions and Assumptions," 5.

51 Brown, *The Queen's Library,* 3–6.

the historical and local context of works and their authors is key to truly grasping the meaning and authorial intention of the texts. Authors may lose control of their works once they are published, but their role in their gestation is nonetheless fundamental to understanding their works. Indeed, the contrast between the ideological discourse presented by the writer and the interpretations of new readers and adapters for whom that context has been lost is often no less dramatic than the contrast between the actual lives of the exemplary women who feature in these texts and the way they are presented in these works. Each of these divergences allows us to tap into the tensions and anxieties that emerged in late medieval and early modern society vis-à-vis the role of women.

Clearly the flesh-and-bones women explored in this study were not simply "good wives" or "holy queens," whose lives were limited to taking care of their husbands and their children, prayer, and charitable activities. They were all very much in control of what they did, and all were heavily involved in the governing of their kingdoms. In each case, the recipient was chosen as patroness once her childbearing years were behind her; all were close to forty, all were mothers, and—in one of those apparently significant but ultimately empty coincidences that seem so common to history—each marked the end of a dynasty. Sanxa's, Maria de Luna's, and Catalina's dynastic lines died shortly after them, while Isabel the Catholic's was replaced by the House of Habsburg, through her grandson, Carlos V. Had they all lived to see these outcomes, these moralists might have claimed they had come about because, in the end, their patronesses ignored their advice.

In the face of her abusive spouse, Sanxa Ximenis d'Arenós mobilized the resources at her disposal to leave a husband she disliked, never to return, and never to process as a nun as Eiximenis had wished. Rather that abandon politics, as Eiximenis recommended, Maria de Luna acted as queen-lieutenant of the Crown of Aragon and then of the Kingdom of Valencia, and wielded direct power like few other queens of her day, securing the crown for her husband, and acting as his closer adviser during the duration of her reign. Isabel I ruled Castile in her own right, assisted by Fernando II of Aragon, and on her death she passed her kingdom to her daughter, Juana, rather than to her husband. She did indeed cultivate an image of pious and righteous queen, but she did much more than founding monasteries, even if the *Carro de las donas* would have readers think otherwise. In sixteenth-century Portugal, Catalina of Habsburg was her husband's most trustworthy counselor, and after his death she acted as regent of Portugal on behalf of her grandson, Sebastião. As depicted in the *Llibre de les dones,* the *Scala Dei,* the *Libro de las donas,* and the *Carro de las donas* women were not to be active in politics, but

in late medieval and early modern Iberia and Europe they certainly were—even though queen consorts were gradually edged out by the "royal favorite," a position that came to be instutionalized in the Spanish Empire, England, and France, particularly in the seventeenth century.[52]

In spite of the strident moralizing of authors of works like *De institutione feminae christianae* and the *Carro de las donas,* royal women became more important and politically influential than ever in Europe.[53] Carlos V, for example, did not hesitate to appoint his kinswomen as regents and viceroys in order to rule his far-flung empire. In 1529 Carlos appointed his step-grandmother, Germana de Foix, along with her husband, as viceroy of Valencia. His wife, Isabel of Portugal, served as regent of Spain on several occasions. His aunt, Margaret of Austria, was regent in the Low Countries for eleven years, and in 1531 her niece, Mary of Hungary, succeeded her.[54] The Kingdom of Navarre, which was annexed by Castile in 1512, had been continuously ruled by queens since 1425, except for a brief span of fourteen years.[55] During the reign of Felipe II (1556–98), women continued to serve in such roles; the king's sister, Juana (Princess of Portugal), served as regent in Spain, and his half sister, Margaret of Parma, as lieutenant in the Low Countries, eventually to be replaced by the king's daughter, Isabel Clara Eugenia, and her husband.[56] During the reigns of Felipe III, Felipe IV, and Carlos II, women of the royal house continued to hold key political positions.[57] For instance, during the minority of Carlos II (1665–1700), his mother, Queen Mariana, served as regent.

Whatever Francesc Eiximenis, Joan Lluís Vives, and Fray Luis de León thought, wrote, or desired, they could control women only in their texts, not in real life. The sixteenth century was a time of political renaissance for female monarchs across Europe, whether as women ruling in their own right (normally because a male heir had died) or as regents. Hence, Mary Tudor (1553–58), and then Elizabeth I (1558–1603), succeeded to the English throne, while Mary Stuart (1560–67) came to the throne in Scotland.[58] In France, where the Salic law prohibited women from formally inheriting the monarchy, nevertheless a succession of female regents ruled on behalf of their

52 See Elliot, Introduction, 2–4.

53 Jansen, *The Monstrous Regiment;* Monter, *The Rise of Female Kings;* and for the medieval period, see Earenfight, *Medieval Queenship.*

54 Iogh, *Margaret of Austria;* Tremayne, *The First Governess;* Eichberger, *Women of Distinction;* and Rethelyi, *Mary of Hungary.*

55 Woodacre, *The Queens Regnant of Navarre.*

56 Van Wyhe, *Isabel Clara Eugenia.*

57 Sánchez, *The Empress, the Queen, and the Nun.*

58 McLaren, "Queenship in Early Modern England."

husbands and sons, including Louise de Savoie (1515 and 1525) for François I, Catherine de Medici (1560–63) for Charles IX, Marie de Medici (1610–14) for Louis XIII, and Anne d'Autriche (1643–51) for Louis XIV.[59] Such female rulers were not merely exceptions to the rule of masculine authority, but had become an established part of contemporary political culture.

Recent scholarship, particularly the tremendous amount of work done on medieval and early modern queenship in the last decade or so, has begun to incorporate women in the master narrative of political and cultural history. It is now acknowledged that the many royal women who wielded authority as rulers cannot be dismissed as mere anomalies in what was essentially a male-only power structure, but were often partners in what was in effect a plural monarchy. As Theresa Earenfight has suggested, monarchy is best imagined as a "corporative" enterprise, because "queenship and kingship constitute a relational pair" that included the contributions and the sharing of responsibilities among the members of the royal household.[60] Rulership cannot simply be reduced to kingship.

It is more than a little ironic that even as queens came to dominate the European political landscape, the books intended to advise them, or that discussed women's place in society, became increasingly strident in denying that women ought to rule. The Scottish reformer, John Knox, for example, composed *The First Blast of the Trumpet against the Monstruous Regiment of Women* to denounce female monarchs, and particularly the reign of Mary I of England, by arguing that female rule was unnatural and against God's will.[61] No less futile, however, were the efforts by Eiximenis and his ilk to surreptitiously push forward their programs of church reform and the advocacy of their own religious order, by cloaking them in the robe of pious moralizing in order to inspire wealthy and powerful women not merely to better serve God, but to better serve the Observant Franciscans. Such efforts bore fruit from the late fourteenth and through the fifteenth century, when the Observant movement represented the moral vanguard of a church in desperate need of reform, but by the sixteenth century, with the emergence of the Hieronymites, the Jesuits, the Discalced Carmelites, and finally, the Protestant Reformers, the Franciscans were again turning into the old order, and they could simply not compete.

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59 Opfell, *Queens, Empresses, Grand Duchesses;* Crawford, *Perilous Performance;* Matarasso, *Queen's Mate;* Bertière, *Les reines de France;* Knecht, *Catherine de Medici;* Viennot, *La France.*

60 Earenfight, "Without the Persona," 8. See also Silleras-Fernandez, *Power, Piety, and Patronage,* 5–7 and 163–67; and Bianchini, *The Queen's Hand,* 5–8.

61 See Breslow, *The Political Writings,* 37–80.

In the face of the anxieties that feminine autonomy provoked in the masculine society of late medieval and early modern europe, those women who managed to successfully wield authority, whether over themselves or their subjects—and including the women studied here—were successful precisely because they understood the unwritten gender rules of their time, and they fashioned themselves, as Stephen Greenblatt would put it, by constructing their public persona in such a way that it appeared to fulfill the expectations of their particular condition, as it was presented in the texts they read and commissioned.[62] They tended to present themselves as good and pious wives and dedicated mothers—as passive—so they could better achieve a level of authority and power that in theory (or at least in written discourse) was permitted only to men. The rigid concept of gender held by the moralists left them little margin, at best conceding that they could escape the limitations of the female condition if they were members of the ruling elite, and then by "becoming more manly." Or as Elizabeth I of England put it in 1588 in her speech to the troops gathered at Tilbury preparing to confront Felipe II's armada, "I know I have the body of a weak, feeble woman; but I have the heart and stomach of a king, and of a King of England too."[63] Simultaneously, Elizabeth portrayed herself as "the Virgin Queen"—following the trends in chastity of the time. This brings us back to older questions regarding the agency and historical role of women. For example, in 1977 Joan Kelly asked, "Did women have a Renaissance?"[64] The answer is a qualified yes. Most elite women certainly had a Renaissance—the rest considerably less so. But this is an observation that is hardly less true for men. Moreover, those elite women, by patronizing the discourse of the "Renaissance," unwittingly contributed in some degree to reinforcing the fears that characterized misogynistic discourse, and the limits that were placed on women in general.

Studying Francesc Eiximenis's works on women and female conduct, and the persistence and transformation of his ideas over the century and a half following his death, the patronesses these works were composed for, and the precise historical context in which they were written, opens a window onto the struggle by male ideologues to sublimate female power, even as it became more explicit and more potent. From the fourteenth to the sixteenth century,

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62 In Greenblatt's words, in the Renaissance, "fashioning may suggest the achievement of a less tangible shape: a distinctive personality, a characteristic address to the world, a consistent model of perceiving and behaving." Greenblatt, *Renaissance Self-Fashioning,* 2.

63 Levine, *The Heart and Stomach,* 1.

64 Certainly Kelly's question has been answered and debated many times; for instance, Wiesner-Hanks changed the question, asking, "Do women need the Renaissance?," and proposed "early modern" as a more useful category of analysis. See Wiesner-Hanks, "Do Women Need the Renaissance?"

the writings of Eiximenis—either in their original form, as adaptations, or as intertexts—were central to this process, not only on a local scale, but also on a peninsular and a continental level. Indeed, Francesc Eiximenis's *Llibre de les dones* and *Scala Dei* can be seen as serving as bridges connecting his medieval ideals vis-à-vis gender, conduct, and devotion with those espoused in two major early modern works also originating in Iberia: Joan Lluís Vives's *De institutione feminae christianae,* and Ignatius of Loyola's *Spiritual Exercises.* Eiximenis's ideas framed the debate on the status of women, a debate that was carried through the Iberian kingdoms, Iberianizing Iberia, and into the wider world of the Habsburgs primarily by the patronage of royal women. This was a futile struggle on the part of late medieval and early modern moralists of the Iberian Peninsula, who tried to impose on elite women feminine virtues they imagined would keep them in the secondary and sublimated state that the clerical and manly culture of the Christian West demanded, whether in the service of a higher moral cause, or in order to forward the agenda of their particular church institution.

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